

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 659
REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

Monday, February 23, 2026 ~ 6:00 p.m. ~ Regular Board Meeting
Northfield District Office Boardroom
[Meeting Link](#)

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Agenda Approval/Table File
3. Public Comment
4. Announcements and Recognitions
5. Items for Discussion and Reports
 - a. DYC Update: Student Pledge Against Gun Violence
 - b. Proposed 2026-2027 Debt Service Fund Budget
 - c. Proposed 2026-2027 Internal Service Fund Budget
 - d. Board Renewal of Operating Levy
6. Consent Agenda
 - a. Minutes
 - b. Gift Agreements
 - c. Overnight Field Trip Requests
 - d. Financial Reports
 - e. Personnel Items
7. Items for Individual Action
 - a. Approval of Bid for NCEC ABE Renovation
 - b. Contract with MSBA for Superintendent Search Services
 - c. 2026-2027 Operating Capital and Long-Term Facilities Maintenance Budget
 - d. Long-Term Facilities Maintenance Ten Year and Indoor Air Quality Management Plan
 - e. Policy Committee Recommendations
8. Items for Information
 - a. Construction Update No. 23
9. Future Meetings
 - a. Monday, March 2, 2026, 6:00 p.m., District Committee Meetings, Northfield DO Gymnasium
 - b. Monday, March 9, 2026, 6:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield DO Boardroom
 - c. Thursday, March 19, 2026, 6:00-8:00 p.m., Operating Levy Renewal Public Hearing, Northfield DO Gymnasium
 - d. Thursday, April 2, 2026, 5:00 p.m., Board Work Session, Northfield DO Boardroom (Topic: Later School Start Times)
 - e. Monday, April 6, 2026, 5:00 p.m., Special Board Meeting to approve the bids for the NHS Reimagine project, Northfield DO Boardroom
 - f. Monday, April 13, 2026, 6:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield DO Boardroom
10. Closed Session: Labor Negotiations Strategy
(This meeting will be closed as permitted by Minnesota Statute 13D.03 to discuss labor negotiations.)
11. Adjournment

NORTHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
MEMORANDUM

Monday, February 23, 2026 ~ 6:00 p.m. ~ Regular Board Meeting
Northfield District Office Boardroom
[Meeting Link](#)

TO: Members of the Board of Education
FROM: Matthew Hillmann, Ed.D., Superintendent
RE: Explanation of Agenda Items for the Monday, February 23, 2026, Regular School Board Meeting

1. Call to Order
2. Agenda Approval/Table File
3. Public Comment
Public comment for this school board meeting may be made in person at the beginning of the meeting and must comply with the district's public comment guidelines.
4. Announcements and Recognitions
5. Items for Discussion and Reports
 - a. DYC Update: Student Pledge Against Gun Violence. District Youth Council (DYC) members will update the board about the Student Pledge Against Gun Violence, a student-led commitment to resolving conflict without firearms.
 - b. Proposed 2026-2027 Debt Service Fund Budget. Director of Finance Val Mertesdorf will present the 2026-2027 Debt Service Fund Budget. The board will be asked to adopt the budget at the May 11, 2026 board meeting.
 - c. Proposed 2026-2027 Internal Service Fund Budget. Director Mertesdorf will present the 2026-2027 Internal Service Fund Budget. The board will be asked to adopt the budget at the May 11, 2026 board meeting.
 - d. Board Renewal of Operating Levy. Director Mertesdorf and Superintendent Hillmann presented a timeline for board renewal of the 2017 operating levy as part of the FY27 budgeting process at the last board meeting. Board renewal of an operating levy, using the same conditions as originally approved by the voters, is permitted by Minnesota Statute 126C.17.
6. Consent Agenda
Recommendation: Motion to approve the following items listed under the consent agenda.
 - a. Minutes. Minutes of the regular school board meeting held on Feb. 9, 2026.
 - b. Gift Agreements. Gift agreements to be approved are attached.
 - c. Overnight Field Trip Requests.
 - i. Northfield High School FFA Advisor T.J. Austin requests board approval to take five FFA students to Minnesota FFA T.E.C. Connect March 1-3, 2026 in St. Paul, MN.
 - ii. Northfield High School FFA Advisor T.J. Austin requests board approval to take two FFA students to the Minnesota FFA Agricultural Policy Experience March 1-3, 2026 in St. Paul, MN.
 - d. Financial Reports.
 - i. Financial Reports - October 2025. Director Mertesdorf requests the board approve paid bills totaling \$2,833,276.75, payroll checks totaling \$3,879,423.15, a wire transfer totaling \$400,000.00 from Frandsen General to Frandsen Sweep, a wire transfer totaling \$50,000.00 from Frandsen Sweep to Frandsen General, a wire transfer totaling \$3,169,085.09 from MNTrust GO Bond Oper to MSDLAF Liquid, and the financial reports for October 2025. At the end of October 2025, total cash and investments amounted to \$74,952,886.59. No bond payments were paid in October.

- ii. Financial Reports - November 2025. Director Mertesdorf requests the board approve paid bills totaling \$3,126,913.92, payroll checks totaling \$3,718,183.36, a wire transfer totaling \$300,000.00 from Frandsen General to Frandsen Sweep, a wire transfer totaling \$500,000.00 from Frandsen Sweep to Frandsen General, and the financial reports for November 2025. At the end of November 2025, total cash and investments amounted to \$75,907,160.61. No bond payments were paid in November.
- e. Personnel Items.
- i. Appointments
 1. Hezekiah Ben Shirnai, Head Girls Golf Coach at the Middle School beginning 3/30/2026. \$3,393 stipend.
 2. Hollis Holden, Instructor Lead for Community Education/Recreation effective 4/6/2026-5/31/2026. Step 2, \$16.37/hr.
 3. Robin Lerbakken, 1.0 FTE Long-Term Substitute Speech/Language Pathologist at Greenvale Park effective 3/9/2026-6/10/2026. MA10, Step 10.
 - ii. Increase/Decrease/Changes in Assignment
 1. Richelle Audiss, CNA I at the Middle School, add Assistant Middle School Boys Tennis coach effective 3/30/2026. \$2,828 stipend.
 2. Tyler Faust, Behavior Support Specialist for the District, change to Special Education Teacher at Greenvale Park effective 2/2/2026-6/10/2026.
 3. Natalie Giles, .90 FTE Early Childhood Teacher at the NCEC, change to .9125 FTE effective 8/25/2025.
 4. Madalyn Heinz, .90 FTE Long-Term Substitute Early Childhood Teacher at the NCEC, change to .9125 FTE effective 8/25/2025-4/3/2026.
 5. Hollis Holden, Instructor Lead for Community Education/Recreation, add Instructor Assistant as needed effective 4/6/2026/5/31/2026. Step 2, \$15.29/hr.
 6. Cecelia Kivell, Special Education EA/PCA at Bridgewater, add Substitute KidVentures Site Assistant on call, as needed effective 2/10/2026.
 7. Marea Nielsen, KidVentures Site Assistant on call, as needed at Bridgewater, change to KidVentures Site Assistant for up to 12 hrs/week at Greenvale Park effective 2/13/2026.
 - iii. Leave of Absences
 1. Armando Martinez Rosas, Head Custodian at the Middle School, FMLA leave of absence beginning 2/11/2026 and continuing through 2/20/2026.
 2. Angela Schock, Teacher at the Middle School, FMLA leave of absence beginning 3/20/2026 and continuing on an intermittent basis for up to 60 work days.
 3. Tegan Underdahl, Early Ventures Teacher at the NCEC, extend leave of absence through 4/17/2026.
 - iv. Retirements/Resignations/Terminations
 1. Matthew Hillmann, Superintendent of the District, retirement effective 6/30/2026.
 2. Emyla Lewis, Community School Club Leader at Greenvale Park, resignation effective 2/12/2026.

*Conditional offers of employment are subject to successful completion of a criminal background check and Pre-work screening (if applicable)

7. Items for Individual Action

- a. Approval of Bid for NCEC ABE Renovation. The board is requested to approve the bid for the NCEC ABE renovation project. Bids were received from nine general contractors on or before Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2026 at 3:00 p.m. Mohs Contracting from Owatonna submitted the low base bid in the amount of \$248,780.00. The bid tabulation and recommendation letter from Wold Architects & Engineers is attached. This project is being paid for by a Multipurpose Community Facility Capital Projects Grant awarded by the Minnesota Department of Education.

Superintendent's Recommendation: Motion to award the bid for the NCEC ABE renovation project to Mohs Contracting in the amount of \$248,780.00.

- b. Contract with MSBA for Superintendent Search Services. The board is requested to approve a contract with the Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA) to assist in the superintendent's search. An overview of the services MSBA will provide and their proposal are attached. Barb Dorn, MSBA Director of Leadership Development and Executive Search, will present their proposal and be available to answer questions.

Superintendent's Recommendation: Motion to approve the contract with MSBA to assist in the superintendent's search.

- c. 2026-2027 Operating Capital and Long-Term Facilities Maintenance Budget. The board is requested to approve the 2026-2027 Operating Capital and Long Term Facilities Maintenance Budgets as presented at the February 9, 2026 board meeting.

Superintendent’s Recommendation: Motion to approve the 2026-2027 Operating Capital and Long Term Facilities Maintenance Budgets as follows:

	<u>Revenues</u>	<u>Expenditures</u>
Operating Capital	\$3,548,349	\$3,295,936
Long-Term Facilities Maintenance	\$1,318,809	\$1,206,750

- d. Long-Term Facilities Maintenance Ten Year and Indoor Air Quality Management Plan. The board is requested to approve the Long Term Facilities Maintenance Ten Year Plan and the Indoor Air Quality Management Plan as presented at the February 9, 2026 board meeting.

Superintendent’s Recommendation: Motion to approve the Long Term Facilities Maintenance Ten Year Plan and the Indoor Air Quality Management Plan.

- e. Policy Committee Recommendations. The board is requested to approve the policy committee’s recommended changes to policies 410.1, 426, 502, 527, and 528.

Superintendent’s Recommendation: Motion to approve the policy committee’s recommended changes to policies 410.1, 426, 502, 527, and 528.

8. Items for Information

- a. Construction Update No. 23. Superintendent Hillmann will provide an update on the NHS construction project.

9. Future Meetings

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Reaching Out, Reaching Up:

THE 2027 STRATEGIC PLAN



VISION

We prepare every student for lifelong success by developing critical thinkers who are curious and ready to engage in our society.

BENCHMARKS

1

All children are ready for **kindergarten**.

2

All students are connected to the **community**.

3

All students are at grade level in **reading and mathematics** by the end of third and sixth grades.

4

All students exhibit physical, social and emotional **well-being**.

5

All students have a **connection** with a caring adult beyond their parents as they transition to middle school.

6

All students have interests, goals and a **vision** for the future by the end of eighth grade.

7

All students **graduate** from high school with a plan to reach their full potential.

8

All **employees** report satisfaction in the workplace.

9

All **parents** report satisfaction with their children's educational experience.

10

The district maintains 14% of its annual expenditures in its unassigned fund balance to ensure **financial stability**.

11

Community education provides relevant and accessible learning opportunities for all residents.

Note: The first seven benchmarks are aligned with the language identified by Northfield Promise, a collective impact consortium of 20 community organizations committed to helping Northfield's youth thrive "from cradle to career."

STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS



People

We prioritize the engagement, satisfaction, and support of every student, staff member, and family.



Learner Outcomes

We prepare every student to be academically and socially ready to choose their preferred pathway after high school graduation.



Equity

We ensure that every child has a fair opportunity to reach their full potential.



Communication

We communicate effectively and transparently with all stakeholders.



Stewardship

We responsibly manage our personnel, finances, property, time and environmental impact.



Partnerships

We seek community partnerships that accelerate student achievement of district benchmarks.

Student Pledge Against Gun Violence

February 23, 2026

Purpose of the Pledge

- The Pledge is a youth-driven commitment to never use firearms to settle disputes.
- The Pledge is meant to signify the community's dedication towards responsible and safe use of firearms.



History of the Pledge

- The Pledge was started by *Mary Lewis Grow*, who is from Northfield.
- What started locally became a wider movement as schools and youth programs nationwide adopted the Pledge.
- It now serves as a foundation for conversation around safety, responsibility, and peaceful conflict resolution.



Student Pledge Against Gun Violence

www.pledge.org

The Pledge

I will never bring a gun to school;

**I will never use a gun
to settle a personal problem
or dispute;**

**I will use my influence with
my friends to keep them from using
guns to settle disputes.**

**My individual choices and actions,
when multiplied by those of young
people throughout the country,
will make a difference.**



I will never bring a gun to school;



**I will never use a gun
to settle a personal problem
or dispute;**



**I will use my influence with
my friends to keep them from using
guns to settle disputes.**



**My individual choices and actions,
when multiplied by those of young
people throughout the country,
will make a difference.**

**Together,
by honoring this pledge,
we can
reverse the violence
and grow up in safety.**

Overall Reaction to the Pledge

- According to a poll created by DYC, 83% of student respondents saw the Pledge as a positive experience
- Many students signed the Pledge!



Potential Improvements Moving Forward

- Create a more streamlined and consistent system of gathering the pledges from teachers.
- Provide an optional script for teachers to read from.
- Schedule the Raider Time date further ahead of time.

Questions and Discussion

"We prepare **every** student for lifelong success by developing critical thinkers who are curious and ready to engage in our society."

Debt Service Basics

School districts in Minnesota are the only government entity that is required by statute to seek voter approval to issue bonds. Property taxes serve as the primary source of revenue for the Debt Service Fund. Statutory requirements mandate an annual levy of 105% of the district's debt service payments. This levy is certified each fall as part of the district's annual levy certification process. Expenditures from the Debt Service Fund are statutorily restricted to the payment of principal and interest on outstanding bonds, as well as any associated service fees incurred in the administration of the debt.

Debt Service Revenue

Fiscal year 2025-26 was the first year of the voter approved Reimagine Northfield High School debt. The proposed revenue budget for FY2026-27 is approximately \$9.8 million which is consistent with the prior year. The increase in state sources is related to the increase in the School Bond Agriculture credit.

Debt Service Expenditures

The principal and interest expenditures align with the district's current debt schedules. Additional expenditures include annual service fees related to bond payment processing and required reporting. Total proposed expenditures are estimated at \$9.0 million.

Debt Service Summary

The projected ending fund balance for FY2026-27 is \$3.3 million. The increase in fund balance is a common occurrence due to the accumulation of the additional 5% levy. It is expected that the Minnesota Department of Education will increase the district's debt service excess adjustment for the 2026 Pay 2027 levy cycle.

As of the 2026-27 school year, the district has four outstanding bond issues with a combined principal of \$6.195 million and interest totaling \$2.8 million. The total remaining principal and interest for these bonds is \$103,481,881, scheduled to be repaid over the next twenty-two (22) years. We anticipate authorizing the remaining bond authority for Reimagine Northfield High School in May 2027.

Debt Service Fund

Proposed Budget

2026-27

Strategic Plan

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All children are ready for **kindergarten**.

2
All students are connected to the **community**.

3
All students are at grade level in **reading and mathematics** by the end of third and sixth grades.

4
All students exhibit physical, social and emotional **well-being**.

5
All students have a **connection** with a caring adult beyond their parents as they transition to middle school.

6
All students have interests, goals and a **vision** for the future by the end of eighth grade.

7
All students **graduate** from high school with a plan to reach their full potential.

8
All **employees** report satisfaction in the workplace.

9
All **parents** report satisfaction with their children's educational experience.

10
The district maintains 14% of its annual expenditures in its unassigned fund balance to ensure **financial stability**.

11
Community education provides relevant and accessible learning opportunities for all residents.

Note: The five seven benchmarks are aligned with the language identified by Northfield Promise, a collective impact consortium of 20 community organizations committed to helping Northfield's youth thrive "from cradle to career"

Debt Service Basics

Debt Service Revenue:

- Levy - 105% of debt principal and interest payments
- State - LTFM Aid, Ag credit and other state credits
- Offset of operating capital and LTFM
- Other financing sources – Interest payment from LTFM, refunding bonds, capitalized interest

Debt Service Expenditures:

- Outstanding principal and interest payments
- Other debt costs, i.e. service fees
- Other financing uses – Refunding bond and capitalized interest

Debt Service Revenue

	2023-24 Audit Results	2024-25 Audit Results	2025-26 Revised Budget	2026-27 Proposed Budget
Revenue Summary				
Local property Taxes	\$ 4,999,982	\$ 3,038,227	\$ 9,112,966	\$ 8,939,678
Interest on Investments	184,992	145,686	75,000	75,000
State of MN	926,304	760,069	760,068	869,844
Other Sources	-	-	-	-
Total Revenues	\$ 6,111,278	\$ 3,943,982	\$ 9,948,034	\$ 9,884,522

Debt Service Expenditures

	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
	Audit	Audit	Revised	Proposed
Expenditure Summary	Results	Results	Budget	Budget
Bond Principal	\$ 4,130,000	\$ 2,445,000	\$ 5,970,000	\$ 6,195,000
Bond Interest	1,775,509	1,575,009	2,913,604	2,847,209
Other Debt Service Fees	6,950	5,913	8,000	7,000
Other Uses	-	-	-	-
Total Expenditures	\$ 5,912,459	\$ 4,025,922	\$ 8,891,604	\$ 9,049,209

Debt Service Summary

	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
	Audit	Audit	Revised	Proposed
Fund Summary	Results	Results	Budget	Budget
Revenue	\$ 6,111,278	\$ 3,943,982	\$ 9,948,034	\$ 9,884,522
Expenditures	5,912,459	4,025,922	8,891,604	9,049,209
Net	198,819	(81,940)	1,056,430	835,313
Beginning Fund Balance	1,349,182	1,548,001	1,466,061	2,522,491
Ending Fund Balance	\$ 1,548,001	\$ 1,466,061	\$ 2,522,491	\$ 3,357,804

Principal and Interest Schedule

Issue Date	Net Interest Rate	Original Issue	Purpose	Final Maturity	FY 2026-27 Payments		
					Principal	Interest	Total
3/23/2017	1.93%	\$ 1,325,000	BW Roof	2/1/2027	\$ 150,000	\$ 4,500	\$ 154,500
			Elementary/Early Childhood				
1/31/2019	3.22%	\$ 39,255,000	Childhood	2/1/2039	\$ 2,080,000	\$ 1,278,631	\$ 3,358,631
2/17/2022	1.95%	\$ 3,120,000	LTFM MS Roof	2/1/2042	\$ -	\$ 74,378	\$ 74,378
2/24/2025	3.97%	\$ 39,000,000	Reimagine NHS	2/1/2048	\$ 3,965,000	\$ 1,489,700	\$ 5,454,700
					\$ 6,195,000	\$ 2,847,209	\$ 9,042,209

Maturity Schedule

Fiscal Year	Principal	Interest	Total
2027	6,195,000	2,847,209	9,042,209
2028	3,125,000	2,540,459	5,665,459
2029	2,725,000	2,385,959	5,110,959
2030	2,865,000	2,251,509	5,116,509
2031	3,080,000	2,146,184	5,226,184
2032	3,235,000	2,022,784	5,257,784
2033	3,315,000	1,918,684	5,233,684
2034	3,425,000	1,812,234	5,237,234
2035	3,515,000	1,702,034	5,217,034
2036	3,640,000	1,578,571	5,218,571
2037	3,740,000	1,450,553	5,190,553
2038	3,875,000	1,315,378	5,190,378
2039	4,015,000	1,180,428	5,195,428
2040	2,640,000	1,036,365	3,676,365
2041	2,765,000	935,250	3,700,250
2042	2,895,000	828,880	3,723,880
2043	2,790,000	717,400	3,507,400
2044	2,850,000	605,800	3,455,800
2045	3,050,000	491,800	3,541,800
2046	3,150,000	369,800	3,519,800
2047	3,200,000	243,800	3,443,800
2048	2,895,000	115,800	3,010,800
	\$ 72,985,000	\$ 30,496,881	\$ 103,481,881

Questions?

Thank you!

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INTERNAL SERVICE FUND BASICS:

The Internal Service Fund is used to account for the district's self insured health and dental plans. The dental plan was established in FY06 and the health plan was established in FY12. The revenue is generated by the premiums that the district, our employees and our retirees pay. The Benefits Advisory Committee set the premiums that we charge. Expenditures are actual claims expense and the cost to administer the plan. Our plan administrators are Delta Dental and Blue Cross Blue Shield. The Internal Service Fund is a proprietary fund that is presented separately in the financial statements.

DENTAL:

Our dental participation is declining incrementally. This was expected as we have been prioritizing the budget due to declining enrollment. The benefits advisory committee recommended keeping rates the same for 2026.

The 2026-27 proposed budget shows a slight decrease in charges for services related to decreased participation. The insurance claims are projected to decrease as well due to decreased participation. We anticipate ending 2026-27 with \$253,989 which is slightly above our minimum fund balance goal.

HEALTH:

The health plan participation is declining incrementally similar to the dental program. The benefits advisory committee recommended an 11.4% increase in our premiums effective January 1, 2026. This was in response to the continued high claims experience we have seen for the past few years. The district made a substantial investment in our staff by voluntarily increasing the district contribution during the pandemic to ensure affordable coverage.

The 2026-27 proposed budget shows an increase in charges for services (premium revenue) related to the 11.4% increase in premium. The prescription rebates were more than expected in FY25, so we are increasing this estimate. The claims and administrative costs were calculated based on actual historical claims experience and medical inflation.

A common question I receive is why we have significant administrative fees. The administrative fee is what we pay to BCBS to administer the plan. They send out insurance cards to members, answer member questions, pay all the claims that are submitted from health institutions while verifying that the claims are legitimately covered by our plan. A few large districts do this in house, but it does not make financial sense for a district our size.

The proposed budget shows a slight net increase for 2025-26. This means the increases we've implemented were appropriate to stabilize the fund. The fund balance at the end of 2026-27 is projected to be \$4,478,631. This is slightly above our fund balance goal. This projection provides much needed stability in this fund.

Internal Service Fund

2026-27 Proposed Budget



— Celebrating 150 years —

Strategic Plan

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Internal Service Fund Basics

- Stand alone fund that accounts for our self insured health and dental plans
- Dental was established in FY06 and Health was added in FY12
- Revenue is from the premiums paid by the District, Employees and Retirees
- Expenditures reflect actual claims paid and the administration of the plan
- Currently using Delta Dental and Blue Cross Blue Shield (effective 1/1/2024)
- Stand alone fund that is presented separately on our financial statements
- Stop-loss insurance coverage is \$125,000 per member per year

Dental Fund

PREMIUM

	1.1.2026	1.1.2025	1.1.2024	1.1.2023	1.1.2022	1.1.2021	1.1.2020
Single	\$ 41.97	\$ 41.97	\$ 39.97	\$ 38.07	\$ 38.07	\$ 38.07	\$ 38.07
Family	\$ 123.71	\$ 123.71	\$ 117.82	\$ 112.21	\$ 112.21	\$ 112.21	\$ 112.21

ENROLLMENT

	2026-27	2025-26	2024-25	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21
Single	208	210	203	202	219	195	189
Family	362	380	396	412	405	410	405
Total	570	590	599	614	624	605	594
Change	-3.4%	-1.5%	-2.4%	-1.6%	3.1%	1.9%	-1.5%

Dental Financial Summary

	2023-24 AUDIT RESULTS	2024-25 AUDIT RESULTS	2025-26 ADOPTED BUDGET	2026-27 PROPOSED BUDGET
Beginning Balance	\$410,322	\$359,160	\$348,332	\$286,523
Charges for Services	639,835	654,441	669,882	642,153
Interest Earnings	22,446	17,635	10,000	10,000
Total Sources	1,072,603	1,031,236	1,028,214	938,677
Insurance Claims	675,238	645,230	704,309	648,291
Administrative Fees	38,205	37,674	37,381	36,397
Total Expenditures	713,443	682,904	741,690	684,688
Ending Fund Balance	\$359,160	\$348,332	\$286,523	\$253,989
Goal (40% of Exp Claims)	\$270,095	\$258,092	\$281,724	\$259,316

Health Fund

	PREMIUM					
	1.1.26	1.1.25	1.1.24	1.1.23	1.1.22	1.1.21
CMM-S	\$ 955.96	\$ 858.13	\$ 780.12	\$ 729.08	\$ 659.80	\$ 527.84
CMM- F	\$ 2,908.20	\$ 2,610.59	\$ 2,373.26	\$ 2,218.00	\$ 2,007.84	\$ 1,605.79
HRA - S	\$ 948.77	\$ 851.68	\$ 774.25	\$ 723.60	\$ 654.84	\$ 523.87
HRA - F	\$ 2,884.58	\$ 2,589.39	\$ 2,353.99	\$ 2,199.99	\$ 1,990.94	\$ 1,592.75

	ENROLLMENT					
	2026-27	2025-26	2024-25	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22
CMM-S	64	56	61	57	52	43
CMM- F	39	44	46	53	56	59
HRA - S	83	104	93	100	113	77
HRA - F	230	244	262	272	277	266
	416	448	462	482	498	478
	-7.1%	-3.0%	-4.1%	-3.2%	4.2%	0.0%

Health Financial Summary

	2023-24 AUDIT RESULTS	2024-25 AUDIT RESULTS	2025-26 ADOPTED BUDGET	2026-27 PROPOSED BUDGET
Beginning Balance	\$3,111,136	\$3,107,137	\$3,992,213	\$4,419,524
Charges for Services	9,735,650	10,304,043	10,599,685	11,001,630
RX Rebates	294,772	466,144	290,000	350,000
Interest Earnings	168,646	173,384	85,000	100,000
Total Sources	13,310,204	14,050,708	14,966,898	15,871,154
Insurance Claims	8,859,633	8,740,097	9,192,540	9,927,944
Administrative Fees	1,343,435	1,318,398	1,354,833	1,464,579
Total Expenditures	10,203,068	10,058,495	10,547,374	11,392,523
Ending Fund Balance	\$3,107,137	\$3,992,213	\$4,419,524	\$4,478,631
Goal (40% of Exp Claims)	\$3,543,853	\$3,496,039	\$3,677,016	\$3,971,177
	35%	46%	48%	45%

Questions?

Thank you!

Northfield School District 2017 Operating Levy Board Renewal Timeline | Feb. 9, 2026

Matt Hillmann, Ed.D., Superintendent and Val Mertesdorf, Director of Finance

Executive Summary: Minnesota Statute 126C.17, subdivision 9b permits locally elected school boards to renew existing operating levies one time under the same conditions originally approved by the voters. We recommend that the board consider using its statutory authority to renew the 2017 operating levy as part of the FY27 budgeting process.

Why are we asking the board to renew the operating levy now?

- The levy expires at the end of FY28 and represents approximately \$9 million or 13% of our revenue.
- Renewing the operating levy by board resolution, as permitted by statute, would provide fiscal stability.
- We are in the allowable statutory timeframe for the board to renew the operating levy.

Why was the statute changed to allow boards to renew operating levies by resolution?

The Minnesota Legislature made the change in 2023. Data showed that nearly all operating levy renewal election questions were approved by voters. The Legislature recognized the effort and cost associated with school operating levy elections and provided this option for school boards to renew an operating levy one time using the same conditions as originally approved by the voters.

The statutory authority allows the board to renew the operating levy for:

- “The same as the amount expiring, or for an expiring referendum that was adjusted annually by the rate of inflation, the same as the per pupil amount of the expiring referendum, adjusted annually for inflation in the same manner as if the expiring referendum had continued.”

For the Northfield School District, this would mean renewing it at the existing per pupil amount for fiscal year 2026-27 (\$2,249.44 per pupil) with the annual inflationary increase added each year.

- “The term of the renewed referendum is no longer than the initial term approved by the voters.”

For the Northfield School District, this would mean renewing the operating levy for another ten years.

Timeline

Here is the anticipated timeline for the board’s consideration of renewing the 2017 operating levy:

- Jan. 12: Discussed as part of the financial forecast.
- Feb. 9: Formal presentation and discussion at regular board meeting.
- Feb 23: Follow-up discussion at regular board meeting.
- March 19: Public hearing as required by statute. This meeting will be held at the ALC/District Office Gymnasium from 6-8 pm.
- April 13: Review of public hearing feedback at regular board meeting.
- April 27: Vote on renewing the operating levy by resolution at the regular board meeting as permitted by statute.

Note: If the board chooses not to exercise its statutory authority to renew the 2017 operating levy, we strongly encourage placing the renewal on the 2026 general election ballot.

NORTHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

School Board Minutes

February 9, 2026
District Office Board Room

1. Call to Order

School Board Chair Claudia Gonzalez-George called the regular meeting of the Board of Education of Independent School District No. 659 to order at 6:00 p.m. Present: Butler, Goerwitz, Gonzalez-George, and Quinnell. Absent: Epstein, Miller, and Nelson. This meeting was open to the public, live-streamed and recorded, and access to the recording was posted on the school district website.

2. Agenda Approval/Table File

On a motion by Quinnell seconded by Butler, the board unanimously approved the agenda.

3. Public Comment

There was one public comment.

4. Announcements and Recognitions

- Hand in Hand Preschool, Early Ventures Learning Center, and Early Childhood Family Education will hold an open house on Thursday, February 26 at the Northfield Community Education Center. From 5:45-7:15 p.m., families can tour the building, see classrooms and meet staff. Fall registration for new families begins on March 5.
- On January 21, Greenvale Park staff held an All School Read event. Students in all classrooms read the book, *Lubna and Pebble*, by Wendy Meddour. The award-winning book has a powerful message of friendship, kindness, courage, loss, displacement, immigration, and emotional resilience. Classrooms then partnered with cross-grade Buddy Classrooms to decorate rocks with a connection to the powerful messages in the story. These are on display for conferences as an art installation in the display case. The Greenvale Park PTO supported books for the school event. The concept of the All School Read was learned from Prairie Creek staff. The All School Read was organized by Greenvale Park teachers who participated in the Open Windows Books Cohort Workshop. Teachers include Kimbra Dimick, Betsy McLaughlin, Pam Charlton and Kate Carlson.
- Congratulations to Bode Bulfer, Tommy Cahoon, and Maddie Loritz, who have qualified for the Alpine Ski State Tournament at Giants Ridge on Tuesday, Feb. 10.
- Congratulations to the following athletes for qualifying for the Nordic Ski State Tournament at Giants Ridge Feb. 11-12: Andy Amundson, Max Beckman, Thisbe Jothen, Anne Demas, Makayah Petricka, Allia Doherty, Eliza O'Cooper, Karmen Jagiela, and Mackenzie McQuiston. Alternates are Eva Damm and Mariana Cruz.
- Northfield Middle School was recently recognized by the Minnesota Department of Education for excelling in academic performance and making significant strides in closing achievement gaps. NMS was one of eight schools in Minnesota to receive this honor and only one of four schools to receive recognition in both categories: Exemplary High Performing School and Exemplary Closing the Gaps School. The program was previously the National Blue Ribbon School program, however the U.S. Department of Education ended the program in August. Very few schools receive this award, and even fewer earn recognition in both categories. This honor reflects the dedication of our staff, the hard work of our students, and the support of our families and community.

5. Items for Discussion and Reports

- a. Prairie Creek Community School and Arcadia Charter School Annual Reports. Simon Tyler, Director of Prairie Creek Community School, and Laura Stelter, Director of Arcadia Charter School, reported on the programming at their two charter schools. Prairie Creek is in its 23rd year of operation as a charter school and Arcadia is in its 22nd year of operation under the sponsorship of Northfield Public Schools. These reviews and written reports fulfilled state requirements for annual reporting as well as our district's request that each charter school authorized by Northfield Public Schools present an annual report to the school board.
- b. Prairie Creek and Arcadia Site Visits. Superintendent Hillmann and ALC Director Daryl Kehler visited Prairie Creek Charter School on Dec. 9, 2025, and Arcadia Charter School on Jan. 30, 2026. Director Kehler provided a brief report regarding both visits.

- c. Indigenous (American Indian) Parent Meeting, Service Update, and Vote of Concurrence. Director Kehler shared the activities associated with improving services to Indigenous students and families. The American Indian Parent Advisory Committee (AIPAC) met on Oct. 8, 2025, Nov. 22, 2025, and Jan. 29, 2026. During the Jan. 29, 2026 meeting, the committee held a vote of concurrence to approve the 2025-2026 American Indian Education Aid Program results and develop the program's 2026-2027 goals.
- d. Financial Forecast Follow Up.
 - i. Board Renewal of Operating Levy Timeline. Director of Finance Val Mertesdorf and Superintendent Hillmann presented a timeline for board renewal of the 2017 operating levy as part of the FY27 budgeting process. Board renewal of an operating levy, using the same conditions as originally approved by the voters, is permitted by Minnesota Statute 126C.17.
 - ii. Potential Budget Restorations. Director Mertesdorf and Superintendent Hillmann discussed the potential of restoring targeted items identified in the 2025 priority based budget reduction process due to the stabilized financial forecast.
- e. Proposed 2026-2027 Operating Capital and Long-Term Facilities Maintenance Budget. Director Mertesdorf presented the 2026-2027 Operating Capital Budget and Long-Term Facilities Maintenance Plan. The board will be asked to adopt the budget at the Feb. 23, 2026 board meeting.
- f. Long-Term Facilities Maintenance Ten Year and Indoor Air Quality Management Plan. Director Mertesdorf reviewed the Long-Term Facilities Maintenance ten year revenue and expenditure plan. She also reviewed the indoor air quality management plan. The board will be asked to approve the ten year plan, including the air quality management component, at the Feb. 23, 2026 board meeting. The approved plans must be submitted to the Department of Education.
- g. Policy Committee Recommendations. Superintendent Hillmann presented the policy committee's recommended changes to policies 410.1, 426, 502, 527, and 528. This will be an item for individual action at the Feb. 23, 2026 board meeting.

6. Consent Agenda

On a motion by Goerwitz, seconded by Butler, the board unanimously approved the consent agenda.

- a. Minutes. Minutes of the regular school board meeting held on Jan. 26, 2026.
- b. Gift Agreements. Gift agreements were included in the board packet.
- c. Financial Reports.
 - i. Financial Reports - July 2025. Director Mertesdorf requested the board approve paid bills totaling \$4,336,657.52, payroll checks totaling \$3,425,210.78, bond payments in the amount of \$729,429.38, a wire transfer totaling \$300,000.00 from Frandsen General to Frandsen Sweep, a wire transfer totaling \$350,000.00 from Frandsen Sweep to Frandsen General, and the financial reports for July 2025. At the end of July 2025, total cash and investments amounted to \$70,579,908.52.
 - ii. Financial Reports - August 2025. Director Mertesdorf requested the board approve paid bills totaling \$2,466,582.47, payroll checks totaling \$3,489,978.29, a wire transfer totaling \$450,000.00 from Frandsen General to Frandsen Sweep, a wire transfer totaling \$100,000.00 from Frandsen Sweep to Frandsen General, and the financial reports for August 2025. No bond payments were paid in August. At the end of August 2025, total cash and investments amounted to \$71,060,474.35.
 - iii. Financial Reports - September 2025. Director Mertesdorf requested the board approve paid bills totaling \$2,877,668.38, payroll checks totaling \$3,664,133.11, a wire transfer totaling \$250,000.00 from Frandsen General to Frandsen Sweep, a wire transfer totaling \$150,000.00 from Frandsen Sweep to Frandsen General, and the financial reports for September 2025. No bond payments were paid in September. At the end of September 2025, total cash and investments amounted to \$70,813,565.57.
- d. Personnel Items.
 - i. Appointments

1. Kari Adelman, Long-Term Substitute Special Education EA/PCA for 6.5 hrs/day plus .25 hrs/day supervisory at Spring Creek effective 2/2/2026-4/3/2026. General Ed - Step 4, \$21.44/hr. Special Ed - Step 4, \$23.51/hr.
 2. Jennifer Bowens, Special Education EA/PCA for 6.75 hrs/day at the Middle School beginning 2/2/2026. Step 4, \$23.51/hr.
 3. Alaia Douah, Instructor Assistant for Community Education/Recreation effective 2/7/2026-5/31/2026. Step 2, \$15.29/hr.
 4. Barry Hayes, .3 FTE Assistant Girls Golf Coach at the High School beginning 3/16/2026. 1,357.20 stipend.
 5. Kristin Johnson, 1.0 FTE Long-Term Substitute EL Teacher at Greenvale Park effective 2/9/2026-4/17/2026. MA, Step 10.
 6. Steve Mathre, .5 FTE Assistant Track & Field Coach at the High School beginning 3/9/2026. \$2,832,50 stipend.
 7. Zachariah Simmons, Instructor Lead for Community Education/Recreation effective 2/7/2026-5/31/2026. Step 6, \$17.45/hr.
 8. Natalia Trevino-Avila, Assistant Girls Lacrosse Coach at the High School beginning 3/30/2026. \$4,524 stipend.
- ii. Increase/Decrease/Changes in Assignment
1. Shari Bridley, General Education EA for 17.5 hrs/week at the NCEC, add Special Education EA for 15.5 hrs/week for a total of 33 hrs/week effective 2/2/2026-6/10/2026.
 2. Kahlil Brown, Community School Club Leader at the Middle School, add Instructor Assistant & Instructor Lead for Community Education/Recreation effective 2/7/2026-5/31/2026. Instructor Assistant Step 4, \$15.83/hr. Instructor Lead Step 4, \$16.91/hr.
 3. Tammy McDonough, Substitute Teacher for the District, change to 1.0 FTE LTS Science Teacher at the High School effective 1/28/2026-2/13/2026.
 4. Gabriela Nieves, Early Childhood Outreach Specialist for 40 hrs/week at the NCEC, change to 36.5 hrs/week effective 2/2/2026.
 5. David Pennock, KidVentures Site Assistant for 7.5 hrs/week at Greenvale Park, change to Substitute KidVentures Site Assistant on call, as needed effective 1/30/2026.
 6. Zachariah Simmons, Instructor Lead for Community Education/Recreation, add Instructor Assistant effective 2/7/2026-5/31/2026. \$16.37/hr.
 7. Michele Cruz, CNA I at the Middle School, add Special Education EA/PCA - Bus Duty for 5.83 hours/week at Spring Creek effective 2/9/2026-6/10/2026.
 8. Christine Peterson, Special Education Teacher at the High School, add Homebound Instruction for up to 7 hours/week effective 2/23/2026-3/27/2026.
- iii. Leave of Absences
1. Margaret Christensen, CNA I at Bridgewater, leave of absence beginning 1/9/2026 through 2/13/2026.
 2. Peter Weeks, Teacher at the High School, FMLA Leave of Absence beginning approximately 5/8/2026 and continuing for up to 10 work days.
 3. Amanda Schrader, EL Specialist at Spring Creek, FMLA Leave of Absence beginning 4/29/2026 and continuing through 5/20/2026.
- iv. Retirements/Resignations/Terminations
1. Vicky Chlan, Teacher at the High School, retirement effective 6/10/2026.
 2. Ethan Freier, Teacher at the Middle School, retirement effective 6/10/2026.
 3. Ann Jerdee, Teacher at the Middle School, resignation effective 1/21/2026.
 4. Michelle Sonnega, Teacher at the High School, retirement effective 6/10/2026.
 5. Updated: Tammy Iszler-Johnson, Occupational Therapist, resignation effective 9/22/2025.
 6. Randy Blood Jr., Custodian at Greenvale Park, termination effective 2/9/2026.
 7. Karrie Vogel, Substitute EA for the District, resignation effective 2/5/2026.
 8. Dan Warner, Head Custodian at Spring Creek, retirement effective 2/28/2026.
 9. Tania Will, Principal at Spring Creek, retirement effective 6/30/2026.

7. Items for Individual Action

- a. Resolution Requiring Administration to Make Recommendations Regarding Programming and Staffing for Next Year. On a motion by Butler, seconded by Goerwitz, the board unanimously authorized the administration to make recommendations for additions and reductions in programs and for adding or discontinuing positions. On a roll call vote, voting 'yes' were Butler, Goerwitz, Quinnell, and Gonzalez-George. No one voted 'no'.
- b. Board Committee Assignments. On a motion by Quinnell, seconded by Butler the board unanimously approved board member committee appointments and representation to various organizations and school liaisons for calendar year 2026.

- c. Policy Committee Recommendations. On a motion by Gonzalez-George, seconded by Goerwitz, the board unanimously approved the policy committee's recommended updates to policies 443, 505, 507, and 520.1.

8. Items for Information

- a. Later School Start Times Work Session Recap. Superintendent Hillmann gave a recap of the Jan. 29, 2026 later school start times work session.
- b. Enrollment Report. Superintendent Hillmann reviewed the February 2026 enrollment report.
- c. Construction Update No. 22. Superintendent Hillmann provided an update on the NHS construction project.

9. Future Meetings

- a. Monday, February 23, 2026, 6:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield DO Boardroom
- b. Monday, March 2, 2026, 6:00 p.m., District Committee Meetings, Northfield DO Gymnasium
- c. Monday, March 9, 2026, 6:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield DO Boardroom
- d. Thursday, March 19, 2026, 6:00-8:00 p.m., Operating Levy Renewal Public Hearing, ALC/DO Gymnasium
- e. Thursday, April 2, 2026, 5:00 p.m., Board Work Session, Northfield DO Boardroom
(Topic: Later School Start Times)

10. Adjournment

On a motion by Quinnell, seconded by Butler, the board unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting at 8:23 p.m.

Maggie Epstein
School Board Clerk

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING DONATIONS

The following resolution was moved by _____ and seconded by _____:

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes 123B.02, Sub. 6 provides: “ The board may receive, for the benefit of the district, bequests, donations, or gifts for any proper purpose and apply the same to the purpose designated. In that behalf, the board may act as trustee of any trust created for the benefit of the district, or for the benefit of pupils thereof, including trusts created to provide pupils of the district with advanced education after completion of high school, in the advancement of education.”; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes 465.03 provides: “Any city, county, school district or town may accept a grant or devise of real or personal property and maintain such property for the benefit of its citizens in accordance with the terms prescribed by the donor. Nothing herein shall authorize such acceptance or use for religious or sectarian purposes. Every such acceptance shall be by resolution of the governing body adopted by a two-thirds majority of its members, expressing such terms in full.”; and

WHEREAS, every such acceptance shall be by resolution of the governing body adopted by a two-thirds majority of its members, expressing such terms in full;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the School Board of Northfield Public Schools, ISD 659, gratefully accepts the following donations as identified below:

The vote on adoption of the Resolution was as follows:

Aye:

Nay:

Absent:

Whereupon, said Resolution was declared duly adopted.

By: Claudia Gonzalez-George, Chair

By: Amy Goerwitz, Clerk

Date of the bequest, donation, or gift:	Amount:	Who the bequest, donation, or gift is from:	What the bequest, donation, or gift is for:
2/4/2026	\$500.00	College City Beverage	8th Grade Fun Fest Donation
2/2/2026	Weighted vest with extra weights, switch/ button, 3 iPad carry straps	Anonymous	Students in special education
2/9/2026	Scholarship Donation \$10.00	Anna Springer	BW Grade 3 History Museum Field Trip
2/9/2026	\$4,000.00	Greenvale Park Elementary PTO	Math Corps Tutors
2/10/2026	\$500.00	Kraby/Decker Law Firm	8th Grade Fun Fest Donation
2/10/2026	\$50.00	Community Resource Bank	8th Grade Fun Fest Donation
2/10/2026	Scholarship Donation \$9.00	Jeremy Loebach	BW 4th Grade Mill City Museum
2/10/2026	Scholarship Donation \$9.00	Kathie Vrieze	BW 4th Grade Mill City Museum
2/10/2026	Scholarship Donation \$10.00	Jennifer Welch	BW Grade 3 History Museum Field Trip
2/10/2026	Scholarship Donation \$12.00	Laura Jensen	GVP Gr. 2 Mill City Museum
2/11/2026	Scholarship Donation \$5.00	Stefanie Johnson	BW Grade 3 History Museum Field Trip
2/12/2026	\$3,057.00	BW Booster Club	J. Peterson Snack Funds \$200.00, Phy Ed Rollerskating Unit \$1600.00 Conference Food \$507.00 Kindness Retreat deposit Fy27 \$750.00
2/12/2026	Scholarship Donation \$9.00	Kimesha Winn	GVP Gr. 3-5 Roller Skating
2/12/2026	\$500.00	Waterford Warriors Snowmobile Club	FFA Sponsorship for State Convention
2/13/2026	\$34.00	Marie Gabert	Scholarship Donation \$17.00
2/13/2026	\$34.00	Brianne Hoffert	Scholarship Donation \$17.00
2/13/2026	\$34.00	Courtney Ahlers-Nelson	Scholarship Donation \$17.00
2/13/2026	\$17.00	Brianne Hoffert	Scholarship Donation \$17.00
2/13/2026	\$250.00	Amy McBroom	NMS Fun Fest Donor-Sponsor Bingo Sponsor
2/16/2026	\$500.00	Northfield Insurance Agency	Grade 8 Fun Fest Donation



Northfield Public Schools
Northfield, MN

EXTENDED FIELD TRIP FORM

Staff Member(s) Responsible (Name and phone): T-J Austin FFA 507 663-0630
ext: 11427

School and Program: Northfield FFA

Date of Requested Trip: Sun. March 1-3

1. What group is taking this trip?

FFA

2. Estimated # of Students: 5 # Adult Supervisors: 3

3. Destination: MN FFA T.E.C. Connect

4. Date/Time of Departure: Sun. March 1 @ 12:00pm

5. Date/Time of Return: Tues. March 3 @ 2:45pm

6. State purpose and/or educational value of trip (attach information to form if needed).

Enhance technical skills, explore cutting-edge innovations, connect classroom learning with real-world opportunities

7. Name the manner of travel and the carrier.

Northfield Bus shared w/ MN APEX
Van - Austin drives

8. State housing arrangements (must include name, address and phone number of hotel).

Drury Plaza Hotel
175 10th St. E.
St. Paul, MN 55101
(651) 222-3337

9. List of coach, parent or guardian contact info. (Attach)

T-J. Austin (512) 787-3574

10. List participants (reminder to have participants complete parent/guardian permission form if applicable). (Attach)

~~John M...
Hector M...~~

Sam Harner
Brayden Pasch
Parker Malecha

Charlie Johnson

11. Indicate who will be in charge of supervising the trip (roles and responsibilities).

MN FFA CDE Coordinator Natasha Mortenson
MN FFA Alumni Supporter's Director

12. State the safety precautions and procedures for emergencies while on the trip.

MN state staff with parental contact and emergency contact in place

11. Give budget costs, how the trip will be funded and estimated cost per student.

- \$100/member with members required to pay \$50
- Fundraising
- FFA Activities

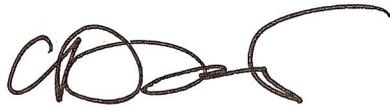
12. List any proposed precautions, special needs, special concerns, student concerns, - if applicable.

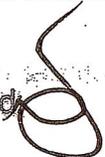
Fish Allergy

Signature of Staff Member Responsible:

Date field trip request was submitted to Principal: 2/6/26

Principal/Administrator Signature and Date:



Approved:  Not Approved:

Superintendent Signature and Date: _____

Approved: _____ Not Approved: _____

School Board Review Date: _____

Approved: _____ Not Approved: _____



Northfield Public Schools
Northfield, MN

EXTENDED FIELD TRIP FORM

Staff Member(s) Responsible (Name and phone): T.J. Austin ⁵⁰⁷ ~~607~~-663-0630
ext. 11427

School and Program: Northfield FFA

Date of Requested Trip: Sun. March 1-3

1. What group is taking this trip?

FFA

2. Estimated # of Students: 2 # Adult Supervisors: 3

3. Destination: MN FFA Agricultural Policy Experience

4. Date/Time of Departure: Sun. March 1 @ 12:00pm

5. Date/Time of Return: Tues. March 3 @ 2:45pm

6. State purpose and/or educational value of trip (attach information to form if needed).

Understand advocacy as "communicating & acting on behalf of something about which we are knowledgeable, experienced and passionate."

7. Name the manner of travel and the carrier.

Northfield Bus Van ~ Austin drives shared w/ MN FFA T.E.C

8. State housing arrangements (must include name, address and phone number of hotel).

Drury Plaza Hotel (651) 222-3337
175 10th St. E.
St. Paul, MN 55101

9. List of coach, parent or guardian contact info. (Attach)

10. List participants (reminder to have participants complete parent/guardian permission form if applicable). (Attach)

~~Sam Harnes, Brayden Pasch, Parker Matechak~~

Tara Alaniz ; Hector Villanueva

11. Indicate who will be in charge of supervising the trip (roles and responsibilities).

MN FFA Leadership Development Coordinator

12. State the safety precautions and procedures for emergencies while on the trip.

MN state staff with parental contact and emergency contact in place

11. Give budget costs, how the trip will be funded and estimated cost per student.

\$200/member with members required to pay \$100

Fundraising • FFA Activities

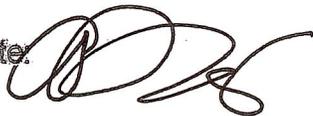
12. List any proposed precautions, special needs, special concerns, student concerns, - if applicable.

N/A

Signature of Staff Member Responsible:

Date field trip request was submitted to Principal: 2/6/26

Principal/Administrator Signature and Date:

 2/6/26

Approved:  Not Approved:

Superintendent Signature and Date: _____

Approved: _____ Not Approved: _____

School Board Review Date: _____

Approved: _____ Not Approved: _____

TO: Dr. Matt Hillmann, Superintendent
FROM: Val Mertesdorf, Director of Finance *VM*
DATE: February 23, 2026
RE: Board Approval of Financial Reports – October 2025

We request that the Board of Education approve paid bills, payroll, bond payments, electronic funds transfers, investments and financial reports for the month of October 2025.

Bills totaling \$2,833,276.75 were paid in October 2025.

Payroll checks totaling \$3,879,423.15 were issued in October 2025.

No bond payments were paid in October 2025.

At the end of October 2025 Total Cash and Investments amounted to \$74,952,886.59.
Wire transfers initiated by the district during October 2025:

\$400,000.00	From Frandsen General to Frandsen Sweep
\$50,000.00	From Frandsen Sweep to Frandsen General
\$3,169,085.09	From MNTrust GO Bond Oper to MSDLAF Liquid

The following financial reports for October 2025 are included to show the current cash and investment balances, details of disbursements and electronic funds transfers.

1. Treasurer's Report
2. Disbursement Report

October 2025 Treasurer's Report

FUNDS	BALANCE BEGINNING OF MONTH	RECEIPTS	DISBURSEMENTS	JOURNAL ENTRIES	BALANCE END OF MONTH
GENERAL FUND	10,849,481.42	7,323,728.94	4,680,308.45	(941,826.55)	12,551,075.36 *
FOOD SERVICE	919,748.44	322,258.08	347,016.41	4,603.66	899,593.77
COMMUNITY ED	733,199.32	447,227.85	409,909.52	(7,400.35)	763,117.30
CONSTRUCTION ACCOUNT	406,498.21	1,168,112.23	392,248.57	5,000,000.00	6,182,361.87
DEBT SERVICE	5,489,625.09	1,539,745.47	-	(5,447.46)	7,023,923.10
SELF INSURANCE	4,452,981.64	47,575.68	883,216.95	917,463.73	4,534,804.10
TOTALS	22,851,534.12	10,848,648.25	6,712,699.90	4,967,393.03	31,954,875.50
GENERAL FUND INVESTMENT	10,424,317.36			35,979.64	10,460,297.00 *
CONSTRUCTION INVESTMENT	37,537,714.09			(5,000,000.00)	32,537,714.09
	47,962,031.45	-	-	(4,964,020.36)	42,998,011.09
GRAND TOTALS	70,813,565.57	10,848,648.25	6,712,699.90	3,372.67	74,952,886.59

*General Fund includes Certificate of Deposit amount

Disbursement Report

ISD 659 - Northfield

October 2025

Disbursements:

Bills Paid:

General Fund	\$ 1,324,476.05	
Food Service Fund	182,610.66	
Community Services Fund	50,724.52	
Construction Fund	392,248.57	
Trust & Agency Fund	-	
Self Insurance Fund	883,216.95	
Total Bills Paid	<u>883,216.95</u>	2,833,276.75

Payroll:

General Fund	3,355,832.40	
Food Service Fund	164,405.75	
Community Services Fund	359,185.00	
Trust Fund	-	
Self Insurance Fund	-	
Total Payroll	<u>-</u>	3,879,423.15

Bond Payments:

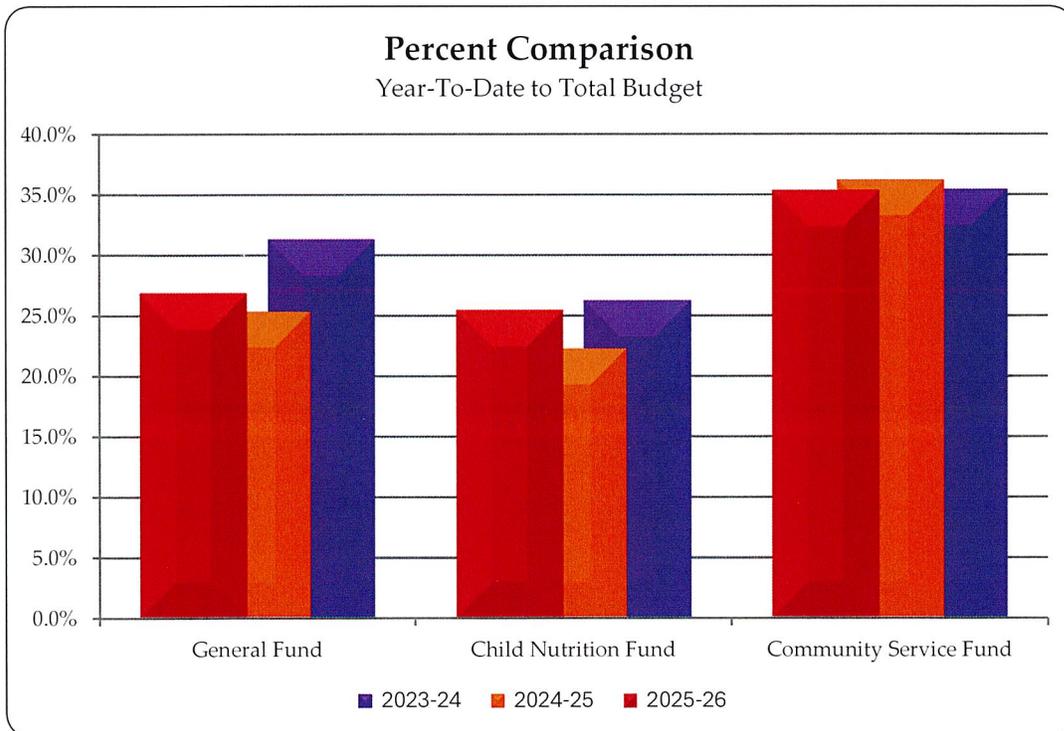
Debt Redemption Fund	<u> </u>	
Total Bond Payments		<u>-</u>
Total Disbursements		<u><u>\$6,712,699.90</u></u>



STATEMENT OF REVENUES

For the month ended October 31, 2025

Fund	Year-To-Date	Budget	YTD as % of Budget		
			2025-26	2024-25	2023-24
General Fund					
Property Taxes	\$ 4,418,750	\$ 18,214,595	24.3%	19.0%	19.8%
State Sources	12,346,348	47,336,761	26.1%	25.7%	29.4%
Federal Sources	562,451	870,000	64.6%	55.7%	151.9%
Local Sources	1,233,840	2,742,446	45.0%	58.3%	61.3%
Total	\$ 18,561,389	\$ 69,163,802	26.8%	25.4%	31.3%
Child Nutrition Fund	\$ 722,595	\$ 2,840,324	25.4%	22.3%	26.3%
Community Service Fund	1,457,528	4,123,775	35.3%	36.2%	35.4%
Construction Fund	1,259,770	1,625,000	77.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Debt Service Fund	2,008,510	9,948,034	20.2%	38.4%	33.1%
Internal Service Fund	3,207,557	11,654,567	27.5%	28.7%	27.1%
Total All Funds	\$ 27,217,349	\$ 99,355,502	27.4%	26.8%	30.9%

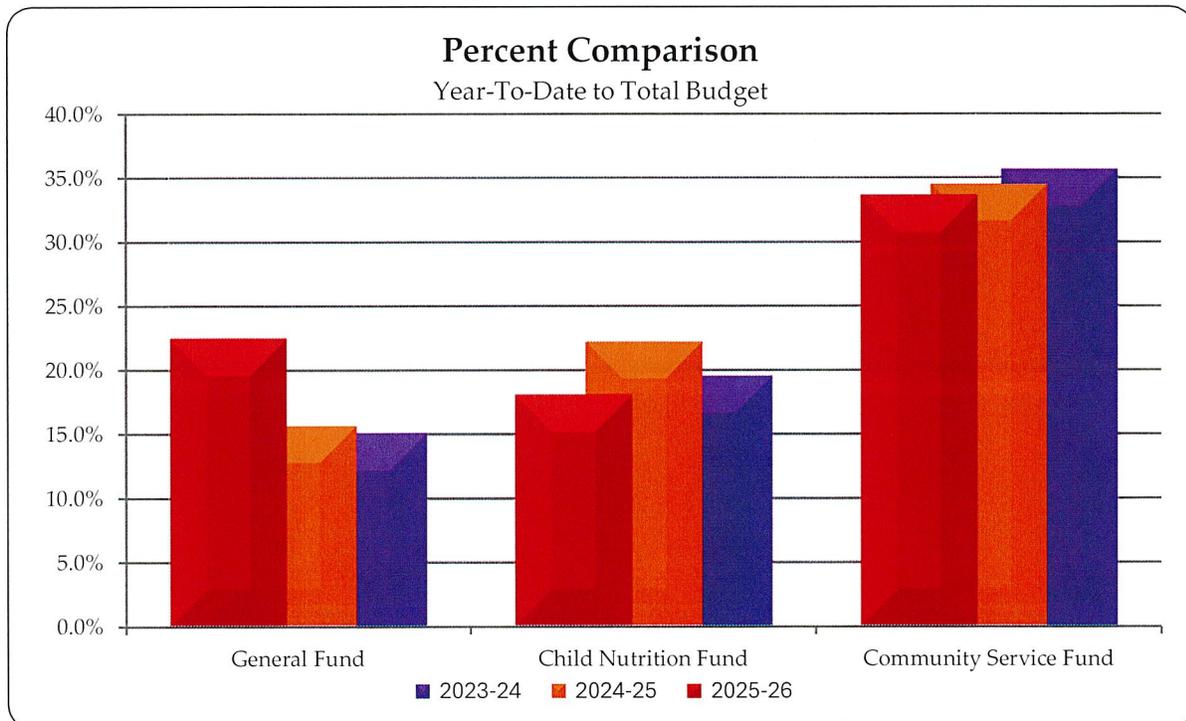




STATEMENT OF EXPENDITURES

For the month ended October 31, 2025

Fund	Year-		YTD as % of Budget		
	To-Date	Budget	2025-26	2024-25	2023-24
General Fund					
Salaries	\$ 7,631,459	\$ 37,570,816	20.3%	12.3%	12.4%
Benefits	3,216,923	16,304,011	19.7%	13.2%	14.2%
Purchased Services	1,929,614	7,569,719	25.5%	13.9%	12.4%
Supplies & Materials	1,164,651	3,300,608	35.3%	33.4%	45.2%
Capital Expenditures	1,147,212	2,757,053	41.6%	54.7%	33.5%
Other Expenses	146,130	352,117	41.5%	31.9%	23.7%
Total General Fund	\$ 15,235,989	\$ 67,854,324	22.5%	15.6%	15.0%
Child Nutrition Fund	\$ 599,532	\$ 3,325,982	18.0%	22.2%	19.5%
Community Service Fund	1,476,480	4,392,456	33.6%	34.5%	35.6%
Construction Fund	1,347,832	13,550,463	9.9%	0.0%	0.0%
Debt Service Fund	730,379	8,891,604	8.2%	19.6%	15.0%
Internal Service Fund	3,777,430	11,289,063	33.5%	30.1%	34.5%
Total All Funds	\$ 23,167,642	\$ 109,303,892	21.2%	16.6%	16.7%



TO: Dr. Matt Hillmann, Superintendent
FROM: Val Mertesdorf, Director of Finance 
DATE: February 23, 2026
RE: Board Approval of Financial Reports – November 2025

We request that the Board of Education approve paid bills, payroll, bond payments, electronic funds transfers, investments and financial reports for the month of November 2025.

Bills totaling \$3,126,913.92 were paid in November 2025.

Payroll checks totaling \$3,718,183.36 were issued in November 2025.

No bond payments were paid in November 2025.

At the end of November 2025 Total Cash and Investments amounted to \$75,907,160.61.
Wire transfers initiated by the district during November 2025:

\$300,000.00	From Frandsen General to Frandsen Sweep
\$500,000.00	From Frandsen Sweep to Frandsen General

The following financial reports for November 2025 are included to show the current cash and investment balances, details of disbursements and electronic funds transfers.

1. Treasurer's Report
2. Disbursement Report

November 2025 Treasurer's Report

FUNDS	BALANCE BEGINNING OF MONTH	RECEIPTS	DISBURSEMENTS	JOURNAL ENTRIES	BALANCE END OF MONTH
GENERAL FUND	12,551,075.36	5,504,065.39	4,838,099.81	(945,200.77)	12,271,840.17 *
FOOD SERVICE	899,593.77	309,162.00	292,448.34	1,240.54	917,547.97
COMMUNITY ED	763,117.30	349,613.83	375,982.79	(3,662.26)	733,086.08
CONSTRUCTION ACCOUNT	6,182,361.87	46,771.25	530,875.93	-	5,698,257.19
DEBT SERVICE	7,023,923.10	1,535,233.83	-	6,226.11	8,565,383.04
SELF INSURANCE	4,534,804.10	45,370.72	807,690.41	917,461.64	4,689,946.05
TOTALS	31,954,875.50	7,790,217.02	6,845,097.28	(23,934.74)	32,876,060.50
GENERAL FUND INVESTMENT	10,460,297.00			33,089.02	10,493,386.02 *
CONSTRUCTION INVESTMENT	32,537,714.09			-	32,537,714.09
	42,998,011.09	-	-	33,089.02	43,031,100.11
GRAND TOTALS	74,952,886.59	7,790,217.02	6,845,097.28	9,154.28	75,907,160.61

*General Fund includes Certificate of Deposit amount

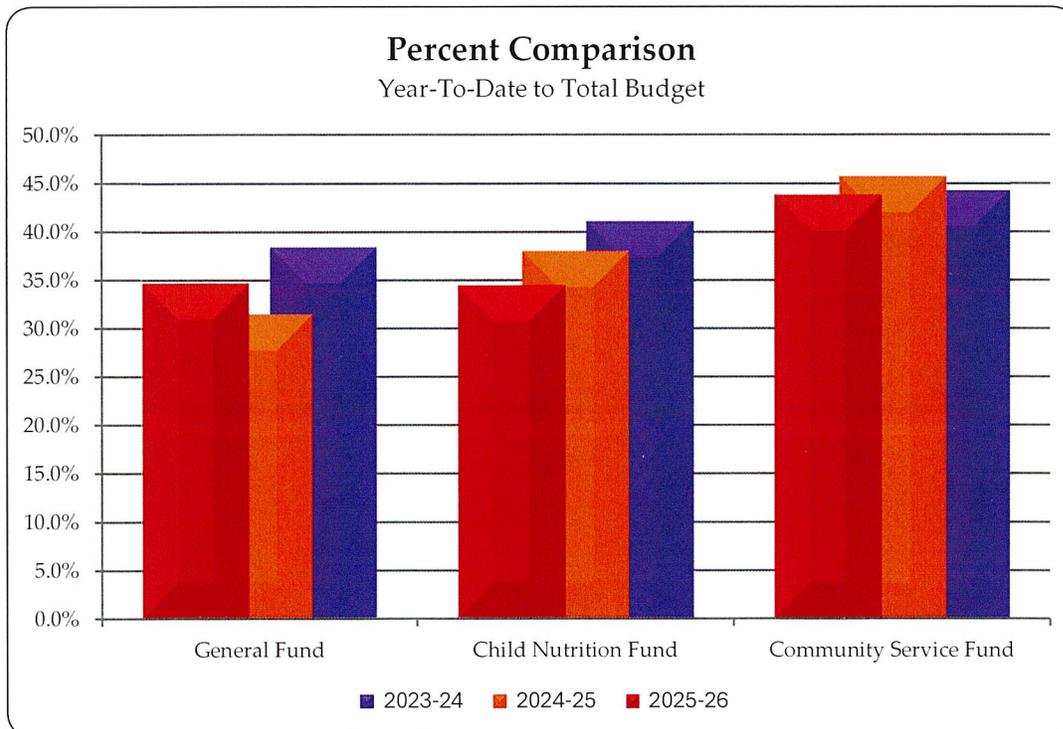


Northfield PUBLIC SCHOOLS

STATEMENT OF REVENUES

For the month ended November 30, 2025

Fund	Year-To-Date	Budget	YTD as % of Budget		
			2025-26	2024-25	2023-24
General Fund					
Property Taxes	\$ 8,751,398	\$ 18,214,595	48.0%	38.4%	38.9%
State Sources	12,617,030	47,336,761	26.7%	25.9%	29.6%
Federal Sources	908,050	870,000	104.4%	55.7%	212.8%
Local Sources	1,706,661	2,742,446	62.2%	79.7%	75.4%
Total	\$ 23,983,139	\$ 69,163,802	34.7%	31.5%	38.4%
Child Nutrition Fund	\$ 977,492	\$ 2,840,324	34.4%	38.0%	41.1%
Community Service Fund	1,806,190	4,123,775	43.8%	45.7%	44.3%
Construction Fund	1,306,542	1,625,000	80.4%	0.0%	0.0%
Debt Service Fund	3,549,970	9,948,034	35.7%	67.8%	57.7%
Internal Service Fund	4,170,371	11,654,567	35.8%	37.3%	35.2%
Total All Funds	\$ 35,793,704	\$ 99,355,502	36.0%	34.7%	39.7%

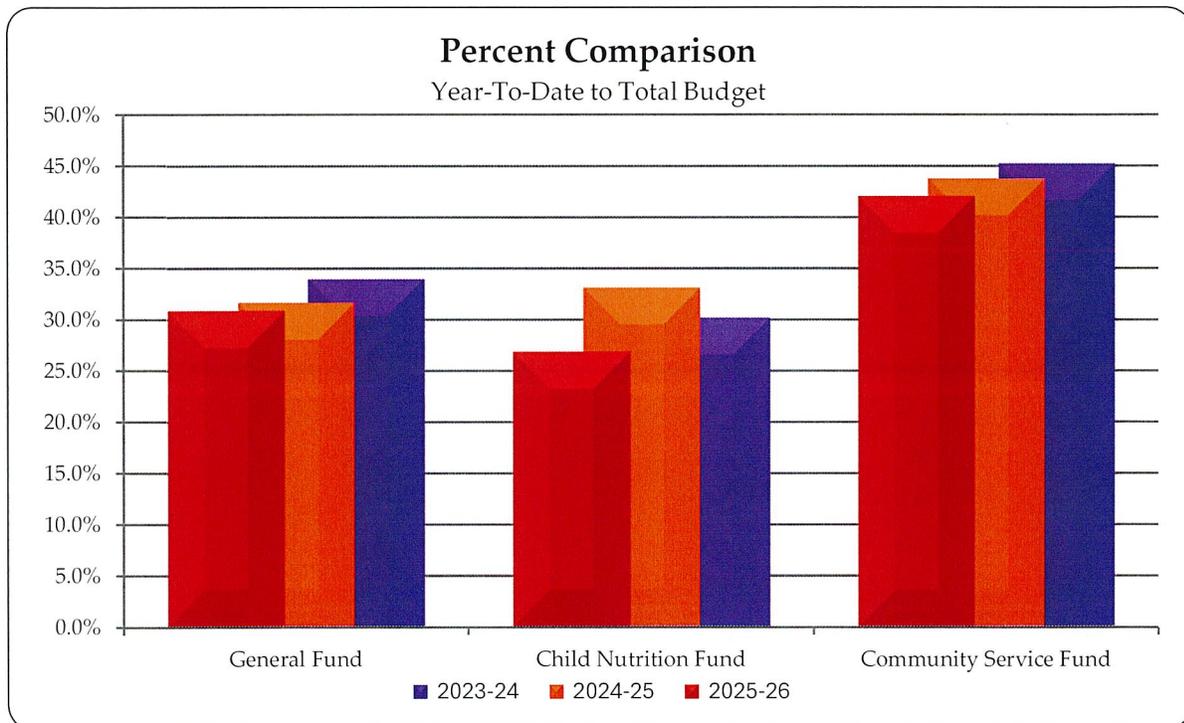




STATEMENT OF EXPENDITURES

For the month ended November 30, 2025

Fund	Year-		YTD as % of Budget		
	To-Date	Budget	2025-26	2024-25	2023-24
General Fund					
Salaries	\$ 10,756,242	\$ 37,570,816	28.6%	29.7%	30.8%
Benefits	4,635,149	16,304,011	28.4%	29.0%	32.1%
Purchased Services	2,760,493	7,569,719	36.5%	27.8%	39.1%
Supplies & Materials	1,321,000	3,300,608	40.0%	40.9%	57.2%
Capital Expenditures	1,296,284	2,757,053	47.0%	71.3%	53.0%
Other Expenses	146,535	352,117	41.6%	36.3%	34.0%
Total General Fund	\$ 20,915,703	\$ 67,854,324	30.8%	31.6%	33.9%
Child Nutrition Fund	\$ 891,981	\$ 3,325,982	26.8%	33.1%	30.2%
Community Service Fund	1,846,130	4,392,456	42.0%	43.7%	45.2%
Construction Fund	1,878,708	13,550,463	13.9%	0.0%	0.0%
Debt Service Fund	730,379	8,891,604	8.2%	19.6%	15.0%
Internal Service Fund	4,585,121	11,289,063	40.6%	35.7%	46.5%
Total All Funds	\$ 30,848,022	\$ 109,303,892	28.2%	32.2%	34.6%



February 18, 2026



Board of Education
Independent School District #659
201 Orchard Street South
Northfield, Minnesota 55057

Re: Independent School District #659
Northfield Community Education Center ABE Renovation
Commission No. 252155

Dear Board of Education:

On Tuesday, February 17, 2026, at 3:00 p.m., bids were received from nine (9) General Contractors for NCEC ABE Renovation project. A bid tabulation is attached for your review. Mohs Contracting from Owatonna, Minnesota submitted the low base bid in the amount of \$248,780.00.

As discussed with District Administration, the project is on budget, and we recommend awarding the contract to Mohs Contracting as follows:

Base Bid	\$248,780.00
TOTAL CONTRACT	\$248,780.00

We have reached out to Mohs Contracting and they have confirmed that they are comfortable with their bid and are ready to proceed to meet the project schedule.

Sincerely,

Wold Architects and Engineers

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sean Kelly", written over a faint, light-colored signature line.

Sean W. Kelly | AIA
Associate

Enclosures

cc: Matt Hillman, ISD #659
Val Mertesdorf, ISD #659
Justin Raabolle, ISD #659
Sal Bagley, Wold
Katelyn Chambers, Wold

CM/EDU-MN-/ISD659/Northfield Comm Edu/252155/Admin/Letters/2026.02.18 Letter to Board of Education

Wold Architects and Engineers
50 South 6th Street, Suite 2250
Minneapolis, MN 55402
woldae.com | 612 772 9025

**PLANNERS
ARCHITECTS
ENGINEERS**



Project Name: NCEC ABE Renovation

BID TABULATION

Commission No.: 252155
Date: 2/17/2026
Time: 3:00 PM

Wold Architects and Engineers
50 S 6th St, Suite 2250
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402
612.772.9025

Bidders Name	Addendum Numbers	Bid Security	Base Bid	Remarks
Met-Con 15760 Acorn Trail Faribault, MN 55021 507-332-2266	1 & 2	Y	\$271,800	
Mohs Contracting 1330 State Ave NW Owatonna, MN 55060 507-279-9355	1 & 2	Y	\$248,780	Apparent Low
Derau Construction 1407 Cliff Rd E Burnsville, MN 55337 952-697-5130	1 & 2	Y	\$284,700	
Stanley & Wencil, LLC 5500 Cottonwood Ln SE Prior Lake, MN 55372 952-254-1591	1 & 2	Y	\$342,204	
Parkos Const. 1010 Robert St S West St. Paul, MN 55118 651-455-0031	1 & 2	Y	\$306,800	
KNB Contracting, LLC 10464 Monroe Ave NW South Haven, MN 55382 612-201-7845	1 & 2	Y	\$279,000	



Project Name: NCEC ABE Renovation

BID TABULATION

Commission No.: 252155
Date: 2/17/2026
Time: 3:00 PM

Wold Architects and Engineers
50 S 6th St, Suite 2250
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402
612.772.9025

Bidders Name	Addendum Numbers	Bid Security	Base Bid	Remarks
Joseph Co. 1084 Earl St St. Paul, MN 55106 507-415-4332	1 & 2	Y	\$302,800	
Brennan Construction 3255 Garfield Ave Minneapolis, MN 55408 501-625-5417	1 & 2	Y	\$367,500	
Schreiber Mullaney Const. 1286 Hudson Road St. Paul, MN 55106 651-774-9445	1 & 2	Y	\$306,890	

NORTHFIELD SEARCH - \$15,900 - MSBA would:

1. Conduct an initial planning meeting with the school board to establish the search timeline, discuss hiring criteria and public involvement, identify the district's position in the marketplace, determine advertising venues, and finalize all processes and procedures for conducting the search. *
2. Collect public input through an online qualifications and quantitative data survey (in multiple languages as requested by the district). Results will be summarized for the school board by MSBA.
3. Hold Search Preview meetings with district leadership to share information and answer their questions.
4. Conduct focus groups and/or listening sessions with a cross-section of district constituencies if requested by the district. Results will be summarized for the school board by MSBA.
5. Host an online informational proprietary **Q&A with MSBA** session regarding the superintendent search process, and provide the recording for placement on the district's website. **
6. Develop a two-sided color vacancy announcement and post on both statewide and national job sites.
7. Directly contact Superintendents, Assistant Superintendents, Service Cooperative Directors, Principals, Assistant Principals, and Cabinet Members across the state to advertise the vacancy and share how to apply.
8. Develop all application procedures, handle applicants' calls and correspondence, collect and review applicants' files, and receive applicants' credentials.
9. Screen the applicant pool against the school board's established hiring criteria and leadership profile.
10. Conduct preliminary verification of references and pre-interviews and vetting of applicants who best meet the school board's hiring criteria and leadership profile as determined by MSBA's screening team.
11. Conduct a meeting with the school board for purposes of interview training, developing interview questions, and clarifying interview schedules. **
12. Conduct a meeting with the school board for purposes of presenting candidate recommendations so the school board can select finalists for interviews, and clarifying remaining steps of the search process. **
13. Coordinate with finalists and be present during the first and second rounds of interviews. *
14. Prepare a news release for the district to send to the media, school district staff, and community that includes the names of the finalists who will be interviewed.
15. Facilitate public involvement in the second round of interviews, if requested. *
16. Prepare a news release for the district to send to the media, school district staff, and community introducing the new superintendent.
17. Assist in developing a transition plan for the new superintendent, if requested.
18. Visit the new superintendent during their first year of employment. *
19. Facilitate a Transition Workshop to develop goals and/or expectations for the school board and superintendent within six months after the new superintendent begins work in the school district. **

* Designates in-district meetings, if possible.

** Designates virtual meetings. However, at the board's request in-district meetings may be substituted for an additional \$300 per meeting.

MSBA PROPOSAL

FEBRUARY 15, 2026



MINNESOTA SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

EXECUTIVE SEARCH SERVICES

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February 15, 2026

Claudia Gonzalez-George
School Board Chair
Northfield Public Schools
201 Orchard Street South
Northfield, MN 55057

Dear Chair Gonzalez-George and Members of the Northfield School Board:

On behalf of the Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA), thank you for the opportunity to share our qualifications to assist Northfield Public Schools in the search for your next superintendent. This proposal details MSBA's interest in providing search services for your district, and highlights why we believe MSBA's experience, qualifications, and steady hand will provide the support your board needs to successfully complete this crucial and compelling executive search.

As Northfield seeks its next leader, MSBA will assist the school board with crafting the district's leadership profile, designing public involvement, developing district-focused interview processes and procedures, and guiding the board through understanding the impact of Minnesota's Open Meeting Law, Government Data Practices Act, model policies, state statutes, and data requests on search activities. MSBA's deep knowledge in these areas supports and fuels our understanding of the breadth of issues your board faces, and as a result we will ensure that thorough, transparent, effective, and legal processes occur throughout the entirety of your search.

For over 100 years MSBA has been a trusted resource for Minnesota school boards, including the past 15 years spent guiding our members through more than 200 successful superintendent searches. We are now the leading provider of superintendent search services across the state, an honor we feel is directly attributable to listening to our members, learning from every search we've conducted, and continuously improving our process to bring tried-and-true as well as cutting-edge approaches to the districts we serve.

Thank you for your consideration. MSBA would be honored to assist Northfield Public Schools with its upcoming superintendent search, so please contact me if you have any questions or need further clarification on MSBA's services, staff qualifications, fees, or search references.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Barb Dorn'.

Barb Dorn
MSBA Director of Leadership Development and Executive Search

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St. Peter, MN 56082

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**www.mnmsba.org/
ExecutiveSearchService**

Prepared for

Claudia Gonzalez-George
School Board Chair

Prepared by

Barb Dorn
MSBA Executive Search
507-508-5501 (cell)
bdorn@mnmsba.org



INTRODUCTION

One of the most important decisions a school board will ever make is to choose a new superintendent. As the school district's chief executive officer, the superintendent is responsible for providing district-wide leadership, implementing the school board's policies, and ensuring the school board's priorities are met. Effective superintendents ensure that all students are learning at high levels. Ultimately, hiring the right superintendent — someone who possesses the skills and attributes needed to help achieve your school district's vision and strategic priorities — requires time, thoughtful planning, and sound recruitment and employment processes and procedures.

The Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA) is pleased to present the school board of Northfield Public Schools with a proposal for executive search services. MSBA has been providing Minnesota school boards with search services for more than 15 years, and as a result brings a strong school board perspective to the search and its outcome. As your association, we have a vested interest in helping your school board find and hire the best person for its superintendent.

MSBA-led searches are based on one clear premise: all searches are conducted through the lens of school board leadership. This means we understand and prioritize the needs of the board, and the district itself, above all else. Also, throughout the search MSBA will professionally handle every detail and guide the school board through the process, allowing the board to concentrate on the most important aspects of the search — interviewing the most qualified candidates and selecting the next superintendent.

TESTIMONIALS FOR MSBA EXECUTIVE SEARCH SERVICES

"I was incredibly pleased with the process and thankful for the work MSBA did for us. From a board member perspective, MSBA's process is so much more fair and informative compared to other firms we've used. If I'm on the board when we have to do this next, MSBA would certainly be my first choice of firm to hire."

- Matt Moehrle, Board Chair, Sartell-St. Stephen ISD 748

"MSBA provided guidance and recommendations that helped the board tremendously with our search. Throughout our work with them, they continually reinforced that this is a board decision that they are assisting with. Giving the board that level of ownership while providing expertise throughout the process was extremely appreciated."

- Cory Johnson, Board Chair, Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan ISD 196

"MSBA far surpassed our expectations. They are the perfect guide to help school boards navigate the superintendent search process, and I would absolutely recommend MSBA because of their depth of expertise and ability to empower boards to make informed decisions. Also -- and this is no small thing -- the candidates they brought forward were exceptional. I cannot imagine how we could have navigated this experience without them."

- Dr. Jean Marvin, Board Chair, Rochester Public Schools

PLANNING THE SEARCH AND HIRING CRITERIA

Initial Planning Meeting

An MSBA search begins with an initial planning meeting between the school board and the search team. At the planning meeting, a search team member will work with the school board to establish the search timeline, hiring criteria and leadership profile, as well as determine methods of public involvement, identify the district's position in the marketplace, select advertising venues, and finalize all processes, procedures, and expectations for conducting the search.

Some school boards also choose to begin their search by participating in MSBA's "Hiring the Right Superintendent" workshop at no additional charge. This workshop may be utilized as a kick-off to the search, providing board members with a solid foundation of what to expect during the entire process. The workshop booklet has also proven to be a valuable resource and useful tool over the months-long search, particularly for school board members unfamiliar with the search process. Again, this workshop is available (but optional) for all MSBA searches depending upon the needs and circumstances of each individual district.

Determining Hiring Criteria and Leadership Profile

Your district is unique, and an important initial step in the search process is to identify the personal and professional skills and attributes the school board most desires in a superintendent. This in turn will provide the basis for the position leadership profile and hiring criteria. Public input will also be considered in developing the leadership profile, as will the district's strategic plan and mission.

Early in the process MSBA's search team will lead the school board through crafting the profile, which will then be used throughout the duration of the search as a guideline for selecting finalists, creating interview questions, and assessing superintendent candidates to find the best fit for Northfield Public Schools. In other words, the leadership profile and hiring criteria serve as a beacon to help guide the school board in its search from the beginning to end of the process.



PUBLIC INPUT

Several opportunities for public involvement are included in the search package, including:

- an online **survey**, open to all staff, parents, students, community members, and district partners
 - ◇ This survey will include gathering quantitative information on public priorities regarding candidate background, skill set, experience, and personal characteristics.
 - ◇ It will also gather qualitative information through open-ended questions on the challenges and opportunities facing Northfield, and what type of leader could effectively serve the district.
 - ◇ This survey will be offered in multiple languages per the district's request, as well as hard copies to ensure access for those unable or uninterested in taking the survey electronically.
- **Search Preview Meetings** will be held with internal district leadership to inform them of search process details, answer their questions, and ask for their help in getting people involved in the search. This allows trusted resources *from within* the school walls to help share information and bake credibility and integrity into the search process.
- an **informational Q&A session** for all staff and community members regarding the superintendent search process. This public session is hosted virtually by MSBA, and is recorded to ensure all district participants have access to accurate information regarding search processes and expectations. The recording will then be made available on the district website throughout the duration of the search. Launched three years ago, these proprietary **Q&A with MSBA** sessions have proven to be one of the most effective tools a district can utilize to increase both the credibility and transparency of their search, and to limit toxic misinformation. Through leveraging the power of sharing information, these unique Q&A sessions have solidified MSBA's reputation as a provider of clear, accessible, and inclusive superintendent search services.
- **Input Forums** or **Interview Committees** will be offered in conjunction with the second round of interviews. Several options will be provided to the board for consideration, including the pitfalls and opportunities of involving others in the interview process. MSBA will also train participants to ensure adherence to all legal requirements involved in interviewing the finalists.

A la carte Options

Additional options for the school board to consider in gathering public input early in the process is through holding **Focus Groups** and/or **Listening Sessions** across multiple constituencies. These group sessions are a traditional methodology utilized by many search firms as the primary source of public input; however, these sessions must be carefully designed and implemented. MSBA will conduct them if requested, although the board should also consider the value of 24/7 public access to the survey as the initial (and sole) early feedback opportunity. The availability and anonymity of the survey contrasts significantly with the tendency of group sessions to amplify some voices over others, and the inequities which can result from access (or lack thereof) to participate. The decision of why and how to conduct group sessions must be carefully considered before initiating a search, and MSBA will guide this conversation to ensure the best possible decision is made regarding public input for your district's superintendent search process.

ADVERTISING AND RECRUITING

To create, sustain and heighten interest in your district's position, MSBA will utilize and leverage our resources and connections on both a statewide and national scale.

Locally, MSBA's search team will directly contact Superintendents, Assistant/Associate Superintendents, Cabinet Members, Principals, and Assistant Principals across the state to inform them of the vacancy and application procedures. Emails are sent directly to these individuals at regular intervals throughout the search, as well as phone contact to ensure this opportunity remains top of mind particularly for candidates who most closely match the candidate profile. Finally, the vacancy announcement (developed in partnership with the school board) will be posted on the following statewide job opportunity sites:

- Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA). MSBA's superintendent job openings page receives more than 7,000 hits per month during search season, including many from out-of-state applicants as well as former Minnesota administrators looking to return to the state for their own personal or professional reasons
- Minnesota Association of School Administrators (MASA)
- Minnesota EdPost (hosted by St. Cloud State University)

Nationally, MSBA will reach out to contacts across the country through our search team's personal and professional relationships, and our contacts at the National Affiliation of Superintendent Searchers (NASS) as detailed in the following two pages. This year MSBA has also added to our search team a National Recruiter in Josh Pauly. Josh specializes in creating strategic partnerships with school districts, and he travels the country attending national educational conferences to discuss AI as well as to recruit for MSBA-led Minnesota searches such as Northfield's. Josh, a former school board member himself, holds a Master of Education degree from the University of Minnesota and we are excited to have him on the team.

Finally, if desired by the school board, we will post on the following nationwide job sites as well. In that case, any additional advertising costs must be approved by the school board and borne by the school district.

- Top School Jobs (EdWeek)
- American Association of School Administrators (AASA)
- National Alliance of Black School Educators (NABSE)
- Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (ALAS)
- National Indian Education Association (NIEA)

In conclusion, facilitating the complexities of the advertising, recruitment, and application process is one of the MSBA search team's greatest strengths. Not only will we develop all application procedures, handle applicants' calls and correspondences concerning the vacancy, collect and review applicants' files, and develop a recommended pool of applicants for school board consideration, but also aggressively market the opportunity to secure a diversified pool of high-quality individuals interested in the unique opportunity to lead Northfield Public Schools as its next superintendent.

NATIONAL AFFILIATION OF SUPERINTENDENT SEARCHERS



January 1, 2026

Dear School Board Members:

As a school board member, you are about to make one of the most significant decisions of your career: selecting a superintendent. Your decision will have a long-term impact on your school district. To ensure you make the best decision, consider using your state school board association's superintendent search service to facilitate your next search.

The National Affiliation of Superintendent Searchers (NASS), the most experienced network of search professionals in the United States, stands ready to execute a national campaign to find your district's next superintendent. With over **100 consultants** located in 38 states, NASS harnesses the skills and experiences of our search professionals with proven track records of accomplishment. NASS consultants are known for their integrity, passion, and focus. They understand that each search is unique and tailored to meet your district's specific needs. They also recognize the importance of maintaining a successful, long-term relationship between your board and your state school board association. **Since 2022, NASS members have conducted 484 superintendent searches, resulting in over 5,420 applications.**

NASS members serve school boards daily. As Chair of NASS, I can assure you that you will receive personalized attention and a commitment from your NASS professional to assist you in a dedicated and confidential manner, adhering to the specific laws of your state. The successful executive search process commences with a strong team of professional search consultants and culminates in a robust and long-term partnership between the school district and its top administrative leaders. NASS's mission is to identify top executive leadership for school districts across the United States, guided by our core values: ethics, integrity, leadership, and teamwork. If retaining a successful and long-term leader is a priority for your district, consider partnering with a NASS consultant and your school board association.

Jim Helton

James (Jim) W. Helton
NASS Chair



National Affiliation of Superintendent Searchers (NASS members)

Alabama	Massachusetts	Oklahoma
Alaska	Michigan	Oregon
Arizona	Minnesota	Pennsylvania
Connecticut	Mississippi	South Carolina
Florida	Missouri	Tennessee
Georgia	Montana	Texas
Idaho	Nebraska	Utah
Illinois	New Hampshire	Vermont
Indiana	New Jersey	Virginia
Kansas	New Mexico	West Virginia
Kentucky	North Carolina	Wisconsin
Maine	North Dakota	Wyoming
Maryland	Ohio	

INTERVIEW PREPARATION

Interview Training and Preparation

One of the things unique to superintendent search activities in Minnesota are the ramifications of our state's Open Meeting Law. Therefore, prior to the application deadline the search team will meet with the school board to help it prepare for and conduct the first and second rounds of interviews and reference checks. Interview training will include information to help school board members conduct interviews in open sessions, as well as abide by all requirements of the Data Practices Act.

The search team will also help the school board develop interview questions that fit the candidate profile, that do not violate the law either directly or indirectly, and that standardize the interview process to ensure a level playing field for all candidates. In addition, the search team will assist the school board with planning second interviews and additional reference checks.

Because hiring the superintendent is the school board's role, MSBA recommends that only its members participate in the finalists' interviews with the board. If the school board decides to involve non-school board members in the interview process, however, the search team will help the school board develop a process that makes clear the advisory nature of the non-school board members' roles that does not infringe upon the school board's role as the sole hiring authority for the position of superintendent. The search team will provide guidelines and training for the non-school board members, and review all questions submitted by group members. By following these recommendations, the school board is able to standardize interview questions and format, provide more control over the selection process, and reduce the school district's risk of liability.

Without question, interview training and preparation is key to a successful superintendent search. MSBA's long-standing reputation for high-quality training programs carries over to our executive search services, and in addition to providing a firm foundation for search decision-making, many boards have found MSBA's training and guidance throughout the process to have strengthened their board relationships as well. This result has become an unexpected bonus for those districts striving to become a more high-functioning school board, as the consensus-building aspects of MSBA's search process helps them become a stronger and more unified team.



SCREENING, MSBA VETTING, AND FINALISTS SELECTION

Screen Applications, Vet Candidates, and Select Finalists

After the application deadline has passed, MSBA's search team will review applicant files in relationship to the position leadership profile established by the school board in order to identify the applicants who best meet the school board's hiring criteria. The search team will then conduct preliminary verification of references and pre-interviews of the applicants who best meet the school board's identified profile. This vetting process involves MSBA staff as well as former superintendents and school board members serving as MSBA service providers during the executive search process.

IMPORTANT: ALL COMPLETED APPLICATIONS will be made available to school board members to review prior to the candidate selection meeting. A foundational belief of MSBA's executive search service is that it is crucial for board members, as the district's hiring authority, to have the opportunity to review all applications in order to make the most informed decision possible. This information is confidential and must be treated in accordance with Minnesota's Data Practices Act, and MSBA's training services during the search will outline all board responsibilities regarding data privacy issues.

Once the screening, preliminary verification of references, pre-interviews, and vetting have been completed by MSBA, the search team will meet with the school board to recommend those candidates MSBA feels best fit your district's leadership profile and assist the school board in selecting those to be interviewed. The next page in this proposal outlines MSBA's vetting process in greater detail.

Following the school board's selection of finalists, the search team will prepare a news release for the district to send to staff, the media, and community including the names of those to be interviewed, as well as the schedule of remaining search-related activities.



MSBA'S APPLICANT VETTING PROCESS

After the application deadline has passed, a team of MSBA service providers and staff review all completed applications. MSBA will look at their licensure, references and recommendations, and work and educational history. We then align each applicant's background, experience and application information with the district's hiring criteria, leadership profile, and feedback gathered from the public regarding the next superintendent's desirable skills, traits, and experience.

After reviewing all completed applications, each member of the vetting team rates all applicants on a 5-point scale and an aggregate rating is compiled.

Next the team meets to discuss the ratings and evaluate which applicants have risen to the top and why. Following a lengthy discussion, consensus is reached on which applicants to consider presenting to the board due to their alignment with the hiring criteria and the district's needs.

This results in the team conducting additional vetting on 8-12 applicants (or more, depending on size and quality of the pool). This vetting includes team members conducting a phone interview with each applicant, holding conversations with at least three of their listed references, and a closer look into each applicant's qualifications. The result is the final list of applicants MSBA recommends be presented to the board for interview consideration.

At the candidate presentation meeting with the board, MSBA will share our recommendations. After hearing short verbal presentations on each applicant, the board will then discuss the applicant pool (by alphabet identifier only to abide by data privacy laws) and request clarification from MSBA as needed (recognizing our responses will also be somewhat limited due to privacy laws). The board then has three options:

- Accept the recommendations made by MSBA for first round interviews as presented.
- Accept some applicants recommended by MSBA but replace others with candidates identified by the school board.
- Forfeit all candidates recommended by MSBA and select an entirely new slate of applicants identified by the school board.

A motion will then be made, seconded, and passed (again, using alphabet identifiers only). Once this motion has passed, the board chair or MSBA will read aloud the names of those selected for first round interviews. These names will be in no particular order and not tied to their alphabet identifiers.

MSBA will then call these applicants to congratulate them, confirm their interest in the position, and inform them they will receive an email from MSBA's application software (Revelus) to schedule their interview. Once all interviews are scheduled, MSBA will send each interviewee an email containing final information for their interview. Finally, applicants not selected for interviews will receive an email thanking them for their interest in the position, and notifying them that the board has chosen to proceed with other candidates who more closely align with the district's hiring criteria.

NOTE: Clear communication during a superintendent search process is extremely important, and over the past five years both candidates and board members alike have praised MSBA's strengths in this area.

CONTRACT AND FOLLOW-UP SERVICES

Decisions, Contract, and Announcement

The search team will guide the school board through the process of contacting the lone finalist to offer the position. MSBA recommends the school board use the MSBA/MASA Model Superintendent Contract as the basis for negotiating the superintendent's contract, and will provide comparative superintendent salary and benefit information to assist the district in negotiating an appropriate compensation package. MSBA's search team will not negotiate the contract for the school board, however, as it is the board's responsibility to set and negotiate all hiring parameters for the new superintendent. The search team will draft a news release for the district to send to staff, the media, and community announcing the new superintendent.

The search team will also personally contact the non-selected finalists.

Transition Plan and Follow-up Services

Once the search is concluded and the parties have a signed contract, the search team will continue to provide support for the school board and superintendent. Past clients have found MSBA's search services follow-through to be invaluable in setting expectations and ensuring success for the new board-superintendent team.

For example, to strengthen the school board and superintendent's working relationship, and to provide support to the new superintendent, the search team will:

- assist in developing a transition plan for the new superintendent, if requested;
- provide the board with MSBA's proprietary guide "Preparing for Your New Superintendent: A Checklist for School Boards"
- facilitate a Transition Workshop to develop goals and/or performance expectations for the school board and superintendent after the new superintendent begins work in the school district;
- visit the new superintendent during their first year of school district employment; and
- be available to answer the new superintendent's and the school board's questions during the transition and beyond via phone, email, workshop, etc.

NOTE: There are **no additional charges** for any of the above transition services.



SUMMARY OF SEARCH SERVICES

The proposed search for Northfield Public Schools includes the services outlined below.

The MSBA Search Team will:

- Conduct an initial planning meeting with the school board to establish the search timeline, discuss hiring criteria and public involvement, identify the district's position in the marketplace, determine advertising venues, and finalize all processes and procedures for conducting the search. *
- Collect public input through an online qualifications and quantitative data survey (in multiple languages as requested by the district). Results will be summarized for the school board by MSBA.
- Hold **Search Preview meetings** with district leadership to share information and answer their questions.
- Conduct focus groups and/or listening sessions with a cross-section of district constituencies if requested by the district for an additional fee. Results will be summarized for the school board by MSBA.
- Host an online informational proprietary **Q&A with MSBA** session regarding the superintendent search process, and provide the recording for placement on the district's website. **
- Develop a two-sided color vacancy announcement and post on both statewide and national job sites.
- Directly contact Superintendents, Assistant Superintendents, Service Cooperative Directors, Principals, Assistant Principals, and Cabinet Members across the state to advertise the vacancy and share how to apply.
- Develop all application procedures, handle applicants' calls and correspondence, collect and review applicants' files, and receive applicants' credentials.
- Screen the applicant pool against the school board's established hiring criteria and leadership profile.
- Conduct preliminary verification of references and pre-interviews and vetting of applicants who best meet the school board's hiring criteria and leadership profile as determined by MSBA's screening team.
- Conduct a meeting with the school board for purposes of interview training, developing interview questions, and clarifying interview schedules. **
- Conduct a meeting with the school board for purposes of presenting candidate recommendations so the school board can select finalists for interviews, and clarifying remaining steps of the search process. **
- Coordinate with finalists and be present during the first and second rounds of interviews. *
- Prepare a news release for the district to send to the media, school district staff, and community that includes the names of the finalists who will be interviewed.
- Facilitate public involvement in the second round of interviews, if requested. *
- Prepare a news release for the district to send to the media, school district staff, and community introducing the new superintendent.
- Assist in developing a transition plan for the new superintendent, if requested.
- Visit the new superintendent during their first year of employment. *
- Facilitate a Transition Workshop to develop goals and/or expectations for the school board and superintendent within six months after the new superintendent begins work in the school district. **

* **Designates in-district meetings, if possible.**

** **Designates virtual meetings. However, at the board's request in-district meetings may be substituted for an additional \$300 per meeting.**

ESTIMATED FEE FOR SERVICE

The professional services fee for Northfield's superintendent search is **\$15,900**. This includes the **MSBA search team's time and all expenses, public survey, Search Preview meetings, Q&A with MSBA session, vacancy brochure, all application procedures, applicant screening, finalist recommendations, interview training, news releases, and MSBA's Transition Workshop.**

A la carte options of **customized public involvement** beyond the above services (such as Focus Groups or Listening Sessions) will be provided for \$1,395 per day or \$300 per group if requested. These options would be added solely at the discretion of the school board.

MSBA does not charge for consultant travel, attendance at interviews, transition services, or any initial or ongoing support of the new board team. As noted earlier, if the board requests it, MSBA's "Hiring the Right Superintendent" workshop is included in our full search services at no additional charge.

Any language interpretation, refreshments, childcare costs, or school board member stipends or expenses associated with finalists' interviews (i.e. travel and lodging for candidates) are not included in this fee.

Finally, MSBA has no potential conflicts of interest in providing these search services to Northfield Public Schools, and the level of services and fee included in this proposal are negotiable based on the school board's needs.

ADDITIONAL FEES: A LA CARTE OPTIONS

NATIONAL ADVERTISING SITES: As referenced on Page 3, additional advertising is available on the following sites at no additional mark-up:

- American Association of School Administrators (AASA) - 30 days @ \$849; diversity boost for \$149
- National Alliance of Black School Educators (NABSE) - 30 days @ \$330; featured job boost for \$125
- Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (ALAS) - 6 weeks @ \$250
- Top School Jobs (EdWeek) - 60 days @ \$895
- National Indian Education Association (NIEA) - 8 weeks @ \$80
- National Association of Special Education Teachers (NASSET) - 3 weeks @ \$275; 6 weeks @ \$360

BACKGROUND CHECKS: National criminal background checks, as well as verification of employment, educational credentials, and professional licensure are also available at a cost of \$395 per candidate.

SATISFACTION GUARANTEE

If, at any time during the first year of the new superintendent's contract the board releases the superintendent, MSBA will conduct a second superintendent search for no additional fee. However, the school board would be responsible for new direct expenses, if any, incurred by MSBA for the second search.

NOTE: this guarantee is dependent upon the new board team's participation in the Transition Workshop, which must be held within six months after the new superintendent begins work in the district. Also, the candidate hired as superintendent must have been included in MSBA's recommended slate of finalists.



HIRING THE RIGHT SUPERINTENDENT - WORKSHOP

One of the most important decisions a school board will ever make is to choose a new superintendent. As part of MSBA's commitment to board leadership, we offer a **Hiring the Right Superintendent** workshop to help school boards learn about the process for conducting a successful superintendent search. Workshop topics include:

- Whether to use a consultant
- How to work with a consultant
- Setting a timeline
- Developing qualifications and selection criteria
- Involving the public as well as the media
- Dealing with internal candidates
- Legal pitfalls
- Interviewing Do's and Don'ts
- Deliberating in public
- Q & A re: superintendent search options and best practices

Each board member receives a booklet with sample vacancy announcement, application form, interview questions, reference check form, and other material board members can adapt for their district's specific needs.

The foundational knowledge this workshop provides helps school boards feel confident in the board's decision-making process regarding the superintendent search, as well as fully prepared to take their next steps. Cost is ~~\$1,395 in-district (\$1,095 virtual)~~ and includes all time and materials. This workshop is available only to MSBA members.

For more information please contact Barb Dorn, Director of Leadership Development and Executive Search, at 507-508-5501 (cell), or bdorn@mnmsba.org.



WHY MSBA?

MSBA believes the following distinguishing features truly differentiate our services from other firms in both the philosophy and implementation of executive search services.

1. LENS OF SCHOOL BOARD LEADERSHIP

MSBA understands not only the best practices of conducting a superintendent search, but also the myriad of challenges and opportunities facing school boards today. In addition we know how to balance Minnesota's Open Meeting Law with our state's Data Practices Act, the increasing pressure on public education to provide an equitable education to each and every student, the impact of data requests on board work, and the vital leadership role a school board must fill in finding its next superintendent. As stated by a school board member after one of last year's MSBA-led searches: *"The best part of the search was MSBA's focus on finding the person that was best for our district, instead of the way other consultants seem more focused on finding jobs for their candidates."* MSBA's strong school board perspective is core to our search process and truly makes us unique among all firms submitting proposals to conduct superintendent searches across the state.

2. TRANSPARENCY AND COMMUNICATION

Every facet of a superintendent search depends upon clear and open communications amongst the school board, search firm, and the public. To ensure transparency we offer our **Search Preview meetings** and **Q&A with MSBA**, and most importantly, we share ALL applications with board members to ensure you make the most informed decisions possible. We understand the additional work this creates for the district's search firm, but believe our ability to conduct the labor-intensive legwork yet guide the process clearly and appropriately, empowers school boards to confidently take ownership of finding the right leader for their district. In addition, MSBA partners with the Board of School Administrators (BOSA) to ensure any applicants we recommend as finalists either already have, or will soon have, a Minnesota superintendent license. This is particularly important for out-of-state superintendents who assume Minnesota has licensure reciprocity, which we do not.

3. NO HIDDEN FEES

Search costs quickly escalate when firms charge for consultant travel, multi-language surveys, attendance at finalist interviews, transition services, workshops, etc. MSBA stands behind all fee options as outlined in this proposal so your board can rest assured that total search costs will not exceed your expectations.

4. POST-HIRING SUPPORT

A new superintendent's first year can feel overwhelming due to volume of workload coupled with a steep and intense learning curve. MSBA firmly believes our transition and follow-up services provided to the new Board-Superintendent Team make a significant difference in ensuring a successful first year. Our Transition Workshop helps you discuss expectations, clarify goals, and lay the groundwork for that year's superintendent performance evaluation process. We also provide a transition plan outline upon request, visit the new superintendent during their first year, and remain fully available by phone, text, email, or workshop to continue building trust and collaboration among board members and their new superintendent. Together all of these MSBA commitments help a superintendent's first year start (and stay) strong.

WHY MSBA? (FROM OUR CLIENTS)

MSBA was willing to allow our board to customize the process to fit our needs. They were thorough, flexible, excellent listeners, and their patience and dedication brought us to a successful finish line.

- Board Chair, Robbinsdale Area Schools

MSBA was both easy to work with and made a daunting process manageable and enjoyable. I believe it also helped draw our board closer.

- Board member, Byron Public Schools

The process was clear from the beginning and the information supporting the process was extremely organized. There were no extraneous steps or information that complicated the process, so the Board and the community could all be on the same page at all times.

- Board member, Rochester Public Schools

MSBA does amazing work! They were very professional, calm and relaxed. They were thorough in their explanations and answers. If anything came up a call was either answered right away or called back quickly. MSBA made the overwhelming process VERY manageable!!"

- Board member, Cleveland Public Schools

MSBA was top notch every step of the way. They were responsive and supportive. I enjoyed working with them and felt comfortable asking them anything. They were a perfect guide for our board to ensure legal compliance and operate with the utmost integrity."

- Board member, Kasson-Mantorville Schools

MSBA handled finding a superintendent with professionalism, thoroughness and gave us what their expectations were from us. They also kept us encouraged that a good outcome would be the result.

- Board member, Litchfield Public Schools

We had a great experience utilizing MSBA for our district's search. They helped us focus on what we wanted in a superintendent, and their process brought clarity and harmony to the board table. Throughout the process we relied heavily on MSBA's expertise, and as a result they helped us find the best possible fit. Our board would unanimously recommend using MSBA for your search.

- Board Chair, Alexandria Public Schools

MSBA was prompt with sharing their insight and providing requested feedback. It felt like we were in experienced hands for this important process.

- Board member, Sartell-St. Stephen ISD 748

The process was very organized and as chair of the board I always felt comfortable working with MSBA. I trusted their advice, appreciated their insights, and felt validated and respected. I can only say good things about the process.

- Board Chair, Bloomington Public Schools

MSBA was great to work with. They provided guidance throughout the process, were professional, knowledgeable, and acted with integrity.

- Board member, Brainerd Public Schools

TENTATIVE TIMELINE

Late February 2026 to Late March 2026

- School board holds initial planning meeting with MSBA search team to establish the timeline, review hiring criteria, identify district's position in the marketplace, determine advertising venues, craft venues for public involvement, and finalize all processes and procedures for conducting the search.
- MSBA holds **Search Preview** meetings with district leaders to share information regarding the search.
- MSBA hosts an informational **Q&A with MSBA** session regarding the superintendent search process.
- MSBA collects public input through survey (optional: focus groups and/or listening sessions)
- MSBA prepares a summary of public input for board to review and integrate into the search process.
- School board approves all advertising materials, including hiring criteria and vacancy brochure.
- MSBA search team finalizes application procedures and advertises the vacancy.

Late March 2026 to Mid-April 2026

- MSBA search team continues to advertise the vacancy and receive applications.
- MSBA search team conducts initial screening of applicants.
- MSBA search team conducts vetting of applicants, preliminary verification of references, and pre-interviews with candidates most aligned with the district's leadership profile and public input.

Mid-April 2026 to Late April 2026

- MSBA's search team meets with the school board to conduct interview training, develop interview questions, clarify interview procedures, and facilitate applicant screening conducted by the school board to select finalists for interviews.

Late April 2026 to Early May 2026

- School board conducts first round of interviews.
- School board conducts reference checks.
- School board conducts second round of interviews (optional: board invites public feedback).
- School board selects lone finalist.

Early May 2026 to Mid-May 2026

- School board negotiates terms and conditions of superintendent's contract.
- School board meets to approve the superintendent's employment contract.

July 1, 2026

- Superintendent reports to work.

Late July 2026 to Late December 2026

- New Board-Superintendent Team participates in MSBA's Transition Workshop.

NOTE: This timeline provides a starting point for considering and adopting a superintendent search timeline. Specific dates and times will be determined at the initial planning meeting.

TEAM QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

MSBA has compiled a team for the Northfield Public Schools superintendent search possessing a wealth of experience across numerous fields in public education throughout the state of Minnesota. These individuals are identified on the following page, and include former:

- School board members
- Superintendents
- Associate Superintendents
- Cabinet-level administrators
- Human Resources professionals
- General counsel / Attorneys
- Cultural diversity trainers
- Teachers and coaches
- Communications specialists
- Project managers

The breadth and depth of qualifications on this team is enormous, and the experience these individuals have in the realm of public education numbers in the hundreds of years. Beyond the statistics, however, a passion for PreK-12 education drives the work we do. Every single person on MSBA's superintendent search team believes in, supports, and advocates for Minnesota's students who attend our state's public schools, and we will bring that same dedication and commitment to the search for Northfield's next superintendent.

But don't just take our word for it, as school board members from recent MSBA searches had this to say:

For MSBA to come into a district where tensions were high and structure unstable, was remarkable. They took on the challenge and made everything very straightforward. I will forever be grateful for the time they took to explain things and reach out to those who had questions. Throughout the search their attitudes remained positive and comforting.

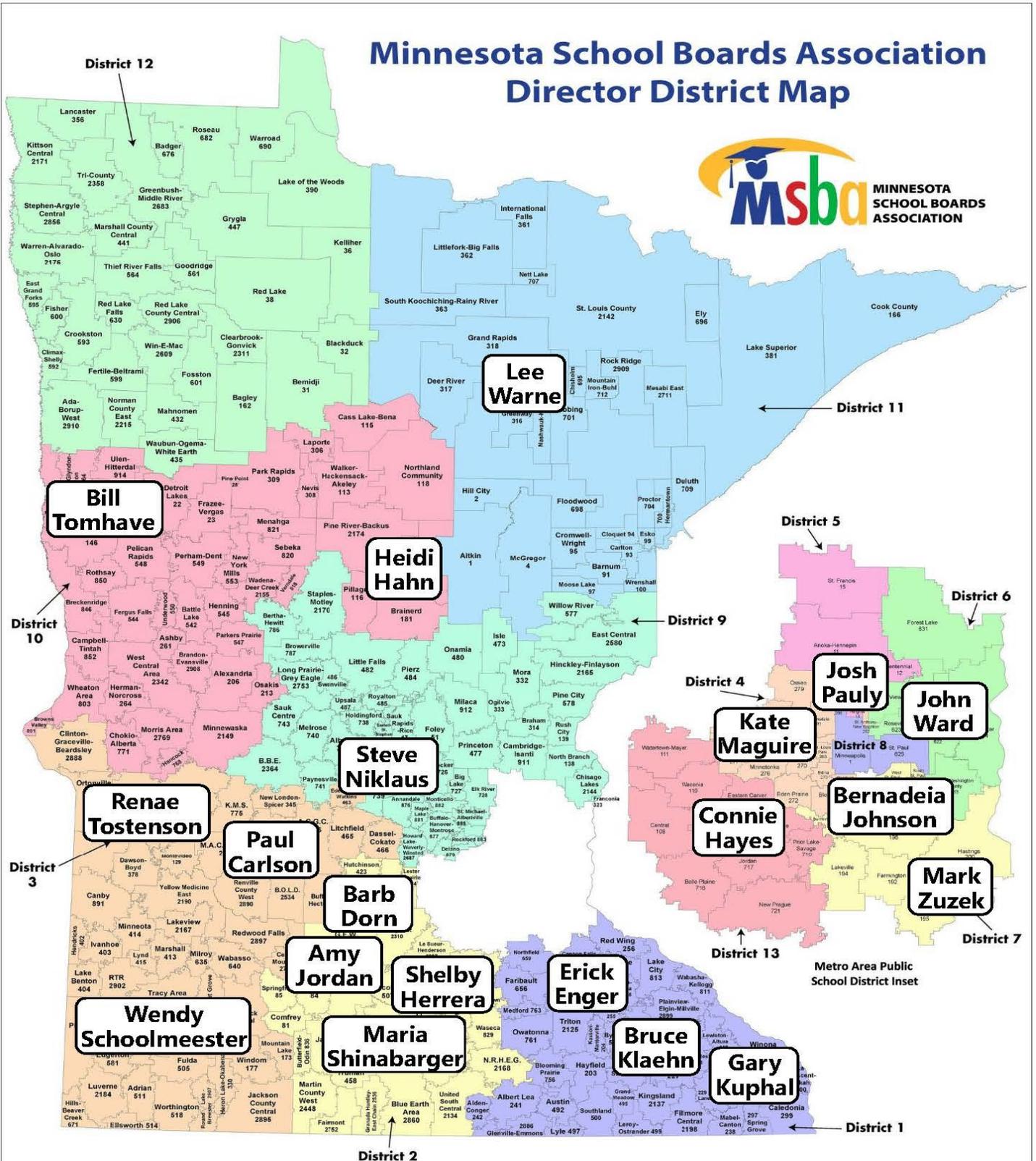
Working with MSBA on our superintendent search was an amazing experience. The entire process was completed with professionalism and dedication. Everything from preparing the hiring criteria to the interviewing of candidates was done transparently. MSBA is an industry leader and our search was successful because of them.

As you'll see in this proposal, MSBA team members' tangible qualifications and experience are viewable on our resumes. The collective background of our team members is impressive. However, the intangibles are what we feel make the biggest differences for our clients. We listen carefully, communicate clearly, and deeply understand the complexities and emotions involved in a superintendent search, not only for the school board, but for staff, students, parents, and community members as well.



TEAM QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

Minnesota School Boards Association Director District Map



2025-2026 MSBA-LED SEARCHES *

* AS OF 2.15.26

- Aitkin Public Schools
- Benson Public Schools
- Brainerd Public Schools
- Crookston Public Schools
- Edina Public Schools
- Hinckley-Finlayson Schools
- Hopkins Public Schools
- Inver Grove Heights Schools
- Jackson County Central Schools
- Pillager Public Schools
- St. Louis County Schools
- Stewartville Public Schools
- Wayzata Public Schools

MSBA 2025-2026 SEARCH SERVICE REFERENCES *

* AS OF 2.15.26

1. Nichol Ramaker, School Board Chair, **STEWARTVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS**, nichol.ramaker@ssdtigers.org
2. Karen Gabler, School Board Chair, **EDINA PUBLIC SCHOOLS**, karen.gabler@edinaschools.org
3. Sarah Speer, School Board Chair, **BRAINERD PUBLIC SCHOOLS**, sarah.speer@isd181.org

The above three searches have concluded this year, but more references will be provided as searches draw to a close (typically MSBA does not provide reference names or contact information until the conclusion of a district's search process).

However, if it is important for you to visit with anyone from the districts whose searches are currently underway, please let us know and we will request permission to share their contact information with you as part of MSBA's proposal to assist Northfield Public Schools with its upcoming search.

2024-2025 MSBA-LED SEARCHES

- Albert Lea Area Schools
- BOLD Public Schools
- Brainerd Public Schools
- Burnsville-Eagan-Savage School District 191
- Byron Public Schools
- Crosby-Ironton School District
- Eden Valley-Watkins ISD 463
- Elk River ISD 728
- Hastings Public Schools
- Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted Public Schools
- Kasson-Mantorville School District
- Kelliher Public School District 36
- La Crescent-Hokah Public Schools
- Lake of the Woods School
- Lynd Public School
- MACCRAY Public Schools
- Mahnomon ISD 432
- McGregor ISD 4
- Melrose Area Public Schools
- Montevideo Public Schools
- Nevis Public School
- Northland Community Schools ISD 118
- Northwest Service Cooperative
- Plainview-Elgin-Millville Community Schools
- Proctor Public Schools
- Red Lake County Central ISD 2906
- Red Lake Falls Schools
- St. Croix Preparatory Academy
- St. James Public Schools
- Saint Peter Public Schools
- Worthington ISD 518

MSBA 2024-2025 SEARCH SERVICE REFERENCES *

* MORE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

1. Dave Klatt, School Board Chair, **ALBERT LEA AREA SCHOOLS**, dave.klatt@alschools.org
2. Anna Werb, School Board Chair, **BURNSVILLE-EAGAN-SAVAGE ISD 191**, awerb@isd191.org
3. Jeremy Aagard, School Board Chair, **BYRON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**, jeremy.aagard@byron.k12.mn.us
4. Julie Alsum, School Board Chair, **MACCRAY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**, alsumj@maccray.k12.mn.us
5. Andrew Lindow, School Board Chair, **NEVIS PUBLIC SCHOOL**, alindow@nevis308.org
6. Lynn Peterson, School Board Chair, **PROCTOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS**, lpeters2@proctor.k12.mn.us
7. Charlie Potts, School Board Chair, **ST. PETER PUBLIC SCHOOLS**, charlie.potts@stpetersschools.org

2023-2024 MSBA-LED SEARCHES

- AFSA Charter School
- Badger Independent School District
- Brainerd Public Schools
- Cleveland Public School
- DaVinci Academy of Arts + Science
- East Grand Forks Public Schools
- Greenbush-Middle River–Tri County Schools
- Hill City School
- International Falls Independent School District
- Kasson-Mantorville Public Schools
- Lac qui Parle Valley School District
- Litchfield Public Schools
- Montevideo Public Schools
- MN River Valley Education District
- New York Mills Public School
- Ogilvie Public Schools
- Plainview-Elgin-Millville Community Schools
- Red Wing Public Schools
- Robbinsdale Area Schools
- Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan District 196
- Sartell-St. Stephen ISD 748
- St. Charles Public Schools
- St. Louis Park Public Schools
- St. Paul City School
- Warren-Alvarado-Oslo School District
- Win-E-Mac Schools

MSBA 2023-2024 SEARCH SERVICE REFERENCES *

* MORE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

1. Cory Johnson, School Board Chair, **Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan District 196**, cory.johnson@district196.org
2. ReNae Bowman, School Board Chair, **Robbinsdale Area Schools**, renae_bowman@rdale.org
3. Alex Carlson, School Board Chair, **Litchfield Public Schools**, acarlson@isd465.org
4. Jim Bryant, School Board Chair, **Red Wing Public Schools**, jrbryant@rwps.org
5. Travis Gransee, School Board Chair, **St. Charles Public Schools**, tgransee@schs.k12.mn.us
6. Kevin Boyles, School Board Chair, **Brainerd Public Schools**, kevin.boyles@isd181.org
7. Kent Harfmann, School Board Chair, **Kasson-Mantorville Public Schools**, k.harfmann@komets.k12.mn.us
8. Tricia Meling, School Board Chair, **Sartell-St. Stephen ISD 748**, tricia.meling@isd748.org

2022-2023 MSBA-LED SEARCHES

- Chisago Lakes School District
- Crookston Public Schools
- Dawson-Boyd Public Schools
- East Grand Forks Public Schools
- Foley Public Schools
- Hastings Public Schools
- Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted Public Schools
- Kaleidoscope Charter School
- Lake City Public Schools
- MACCRAY Public Schools
- Northwest Suburban Integration School District
- Pipestone Area Schools
- Red Wing Public Schools
- ROCORI School District
- Thief River Falls Public Schools
- Tri-County/Greenbush-Middle River Schools
- Wabasha-Kellogg School District
- Winona Area Public Schools
- Zumbrota-Mazeppa Public Schools

MSBA 2022-2023 SEARCH SERVICE REFERENCES *

* MORE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

1. Lori Berg, School Board Chair, **Chisago Lakes School District**, lberg@isd2144.org
2. Frank Fee, School Board Chair, **Crookston Public Schools**, ffee@rrv.net
3. Bruce Lund, School Board Chair, **Dawson-Boyd Public Schools**, blund@dwby.k12.mn.us
4. Lisa Hedin, School Board Chair, **Hastings Public Schools**, lhedin@isd200.org
5. Heath Oeltjen, School Board Chair, **Lake City Public Schools**, hoeltjen@lake-city.k12.mn.us
6. Jim Bryant, School Board Chair, **Red Wing Public Schools**, jrbryant@rwps.org
7. Phil Rosendale, School Board Chair, **Wabasha-Kellogg School District**, philrosendale@wkfalcons.org
8. Nancy Denzer, School Board Chair, **Winona Area Public Schools**, nancy.denzer@winona.k12.mn.us
9. Angie Bredehoft, School Board Chair, **Zumbrota-Mazeppa Public Schools**, angie.bredehoft@zmsch.k12.mn.us

2021-2022 MSBA-LED SEARCHES

- ACGC Public Schools
- Albert Lea Area Schools
- Bemidji Area Schools
- Cass Lake-Bena Public Schools
- Clinton-Graceville-Beardsley Schools
- Dover-Eyota Public Schools
- Fosston Public Schools
- Greenway Public Schools
- Kingsland Public Schools
- La Crescent-Hokah Public Schools
- Long Prairie-Grey Eagle Public Schools
- Menahga School District
- Mid-State Education District
- New London-Spicer School District
- Ortonville Public Schools
- Pequot Lakes Public Schools
- Plainview-Elgin-Millville Community Schools
- Proctor Public Schools
- Red Lake Schools
- ROCORI School District
- South St. Paul Public Schools
- Stillwater Area Public Schools
- Swanville School District
- Thief River Falls Public Schools
- Tri-City United Public Schools
- Tri-County / Greenbush-Middle River Schools
- Ulen-Hitterdal Public Schools
- Underwood School District
- Verndale Public School
- Waconia Public Schools
- Waterville-Elysian-Morristown Public Schools
- West Central Area School District
- Windom Area Schools

MSBA 2021-2022 SEARCH SERVICE REFERENCES *

* MORE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

1. Neal Skaar, School Board Chair, **Albert Lea Area Schools**, neal.skaar@alschools.org
2. Carol Johnson, School Board Chair, **Bemidji Area Schools**, Carol_Johnson@isd31.net
3. Eric Morken, School Board Chair, **La Crescent-Hokah Schools**, eric.morken@isd300.k12.mn.us
4. Kim Bolz-Andolshek, School Board Chair, **Pequot Lakes Public Schools**, kbolz@isd186.org
5. Jennifer McDonald, School Board Chair, **Proctor Public Schools**, jennmcd777@gmail.com
6. Alison Sherman, School Board Chair, **Stillwater Area Schools**, shermana@stillwaterschools.org
7. Dana Geller, School Board Chair, **Waconia Public Schools**, dgeller@isd110.org
8. Gary Michael, School Board Chair, **W-E-M Public Schools**, sba.email@yahoo.com

2020-2021 MSBA-LED SEARCHES

- Austin Public Schools
- Bloomington Public Schools
- Byron Public Schools
- Clinton-Graceville-Beardsley Schools
- Cook County ISD 166
- Dilworth-Glyndon-Felton Public Schools
- Greenway Public Schools
- Houston Public Schools
- Intermediate School District 917
- La Crescent-Hokah Public Schools
- Lac qui Parle Valley School District
- Lake Park Audubon School District
- Lynd Public School
- Montevideo Public Schools
- Rochester Public Schools
- Royalton Public Schools
- Tri-County Schools
- Ulen-Hitterdal Public Schools

Member districts:

Bloomington, Burnsville-Eagan Savage, Farmington, Hastings, Inver Grove Heights, Lakeville, Randolph, South St. Paul, and West St. Paul-Mendota Heights-Eagan

MSBA EXECUTIVE SEARCH SERVICE REFERENCES 2020-2021 SEARCHES

* MORE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

1. Kathy Green, School Board Chair, **Austin Public Schools**, kathy.green@austin.k12.mn.us
2. Nelly Korman, School Board Chair, **Bloomington Public Schools**, nkorman@isd271.org
3. Harvey Bergh, School Board Chair, **Byron Public Schools**, harvey.bergh@byron.k12.mn.us
4. Lindsey Leach, School Board Chair, **DGF Public Schools**, lleach@dgf.k12.mn.us
5. Dr. DeeDee Currier, School Board Chair, **Intermediate School District 917**, dcurrier@isd191.org
6. Kelly Snell, School Board Member, **Montevideo Public Schools**, ksnell@montevideoschools.org
7. Dr. Jean Marvin, School Board Chair, **Rochester Public Schools**, jemarvin@rochesterschools.org

SEARCH TEAM — MSBA STAFF

MSBA’s search team is comprised of experienced MSBA staff and service providers. Search team members understand that selecting a superintendent is one of the board’s most important duties and have a vested interest in the success of your search. Below are brief resumés of MSBA’s search team.

■ BARB DORN

Barb has more than 35 years of experience in nonprofit leadership, marketing and communications, consulting, and process facilitation. She has worked across public, private, and nonprofit sectors to build collaborative and viable partnerships, deliver high-impact workshops, and produce outcomes based on common goals and shared decision-making processes. Barb has also served on the Boards of Directors for Greater Mankato’s City Center Partnership and the area chapter of Leave a Legacy. She joined MSBA in 2019 and is a member of the National Affiliation of Superintendent Searchers.

WORK HISTORY

- Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA): Director of Leadership Development and Executive Search
- YWCA Mankato: Executive Director
- March of Dimes: Division Director
- Minnesota State University Mankato: Adjunct Professor
- Pathways Marketing: Owner / Marketing Consultant
- DLR Group: Business Development / Referendum Consultant

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- Individual school board in-services: Superintendent Search, Mutual Expectations, and Superintendent Evaluation
- Presenter — MSBA workshops, seminars, and conferences:
 - ◇ Superintendent Evaluation
 - ◇ Superintendent Search
 - ◇ Various other topics
- Program and Brand Management, Marketing, and Public Relations
- Daily telephone/email responses to MSBA school board member questions
- Contributor to The MSBA *Leader* newsletter
- Presenter at other professional workshops and conferences:
 - ◇ Leadership Development Series including:
 - Collaboration and Teamwork
 - Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
 - Conflict Management
 - Resiliency
 - Communication and Team-Building
 - ◇ Community Relations
 - ◇ Strategy and Visioning

SEARCH TEAM — MSBA STAFF

▪ AMY JORDAN

With more than 27 years of leadership experience primarily in the nonprofit sector, Amy is a collaborative leader committed to serving the public, with a focus on youth. She has experience in recruitment, training, creating partnerships, policy and compliance, and program management and evaluation. As an empathetic partner, Amy is skilled at finding commonalities and consensus amongst diverse groups. The development of her action plan led her team's work to receive national recognition for exceeding key performance indicators in diversity and inclusion while working for a national nonprofit. With strengths in execution and relationship building, she is a natural cultivator of the potential in others and strives for continuous improvement. Amy is goal-oriented, ethical, deliberative, and possesses basic language skills in both Spanish and ASL (American Sign Language). She joined MSBA in 2022 and is also a member of the National Affiliation of Superintendent Searchers.

WORK HISTORY

- MN School Boards Assoc. (MSBA): Associate Director of Leadership Development & Executive Search
- Miracle League of North Mankato: Executive Director
- YWCA Mankato: Director of Programs for Women and Girls
- Girls on the Run of Greater Mankato: Council Director

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- Leadership of and engagement with multiple community groups
- Collaboration and cooperative working relationships with diverse groups
- Leadership of multiple community programs for women, girls, immigrant and refugee women and their children, and people with disabilities
- Policy development and compliance
- Evaluation management
- Plan development for implementation of best practices
- Brand management and communications
- Facilitation of national training for hundreds of leaders on:
 - ◊ Inclusive language and conversations
 - ◊ Facilitation
 - ◊ Context
 - ◊ Conflict resolution
 - ◊ Relationship-building/Teambuilding
 - ◊ Mastery experiences for self-efficacy
- Presenter — MSBA workshops, seminars, and conferences
- Presenter—National Affiliation of Superintendent Searchers conference
- Daily telephone/email responses to MSBA school board member questions
- Contributor to The MSBA *Leader* newsletter and the MSBA *Journal* magazine

SEARCH TEAM — MSBA STAFF

▪ **TERENCE MORROW, J.D., Ph.D.**

Dr. Morrow holds deep experience in law and policy development; nonprofit and school board development and legal guidance; planning, directing and expanding successful nonprofit fundraising; fiscal and budget oversight; and project management. His government relations experience includes designing and executing state and federal legislative strategy; directing successful policy plans; developing state-specific legislative strategies; testifying before legislative bodies; hiring and managing contract lobbyists and consultants; representing organizations before local, state, and federal agencies and departments; maximizing traditional and new media in campaigns; project management; and building effective coalitions with trade associations, interest groups, and others. Dr. Morrow joined MSBA in 2017.

EDUCATION

- Doctor of Philosophy, Communication Studies
Northwestern University, Evanston, IL
- Juris Doctorate, Law
University of California, Davis
- Bachelor of Arts, Rhetoric
University of California, Berkeley

WORK HISTORY

- Minnesota School Boards Assoc. (MSBA): General Counsel / Director of Legal and Policy Services
- Nicollet County, Minnesota, Board of Commissioners: Elected Board Member
- St. Peter, Minnesota, School Board: Elected Board member
- Uniform Law Commission - Chicago, IL: Legislative Director / Legal Counsel
- Minnesota House of Representatives: Elected Representative of District 23A
- Gustavus Adolphus College: Associate Professor of Communication Studies / Department Chair
- Hoge, Fenton, Jones & Appel - San Jose, CA: Attorney

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- Builds legislative and government relations
- Provides legal guidance to school districts and administrators
- Engages with stakeholder organizations throughout the state
- Drafts commentaries, newsletter updates, legislative summaries, and related documents
- Works with state agencies on licensure and policy issues
- Served rural Minnesota county for two terms as an elected county commissioner
- Served rural district in the Minnesota House of Representatives, including committee assignments on K-12 Policy and Finance (Vice Chair); Agriculture Policy and Finance; Environment; Higher Education Finance and Policy; Rules; State Government; Transportation Policy and Finance
- Led expansion of collegiate academic department; created civic engagement and public discourse initiative
- Presenter — MSBA workshops, seminars, and conferences
 - ◊ Open Meeting Law; Phase trainings; Policy issues; and more
- Daily telephone/email responses to MSBA school board member questions
- Contributor to The MSBA *Leader* newsletter and The Journal publication

SEARCH TEAM — MSBA STAFF

▪ GARY LEE

Gary has 30+ years of experience in private business — both in a large corporate setting and as an owner/president of small rural businesses. Gary is a former member of the Fertile-Beltrami School Board. Gary also served on the MSBA Board of Directors, the Northwest Service Cooperative Board of Directors, the Minnesota Service Cooperatives Board of Directors, the MSBA Insurance Trust Board of Directors, and the Big Three working group. Gary joined MSBA in 2009.

WORK HISTORY

- Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA): Deputy Executive Director
- Lee Nursery, Inc.: Owner and President
- Lee Nursery Supplies, Inc.: Owner and President
- Sondreli Business Services: Owner
- UNISYS (formerly Sperry) Defense Systems: IT Manager

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- Individual school board in-services: Superintendent Search and School Board-Superintendent Relationships
- Presenter — MSBA workshops, seminars, and conferences
- Analyze superintendent employment contracts and negotiations

▪ TIFFANY GUSTIN, MBA

Tiffany has 15+ years of experience working in and with public schools. She served as a school business official for ten years before joining MSBA in 2019. Her experience with district operations includes responsibility for all aspects of finance and human resources, as well as oversight of food service, transportation, and facilities. She is pursuing a doctorate in Leadership in K12 Administration.

WORK HISTORY

- Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA): Director of Management and Insurance Trust Services
- ISD #1 – Aitkin Public Schools: Business Manager
- Technical Services of Duluth: Programmer/Data Analyst
- Aitkin County: Administration and Human Resources Specialist
- Computer Associates International: Software Engineer

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- School board in-services: Negotiations, Leadership Foundations - School Finance and Management, Officers' Workshop - Treasurer
- Facilitation and oversight of the MSBA Insurance Trust
- Presenter: MSBA webinars, workshops, seminars, and conferences
- Presenter: Other professional organization workshops and conferences

SEARCH TEAM — MSBA STAFF

▪ SHELBY HERRERA

Shelby has more than 25 years of experience in education — as a classroom teacher, a paraprofessional, and a teaching assistant at the university level. Shelby joined MSBA in 2019.

WORK HISTORY

- Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA): Administrative Assistant to Strategic Governance
- Mankato Public Schools: Science Teacher
- Mankato Public Schools: Paraprofessional
- Minnesota State University, Mankato: Teaching assistant

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- Conduct research and compile data
- Handle information requests
- Interact with a wide range of staff, business partners, and members
- Prepare reports, memos, letters, and other documents, using word processing, spreadsheet, database, etc.
- Assist applicants and board members with Revelus, MSBA's proprietary application platform

▪ BRUCE LOMBARD

Bruce has more than 15 years of experience providing a full range of administrative support services. Bruce joined MSBA in 2008.

WORK HISTORY

- Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA): Associate Director of Communications and Marketing
- Mankato Free Press: Copy Editor
- Washington Unified School District (West Sacramento, California): Substitute Teacher
- Sogon University Language Program (Seoul, South Korea): English Language Instructor

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- Provides customer support to MSBA members via email and phone
- Occasionally handles information requests from the media
- Posts job openings on MSBA Jobs webpage and in MSBA Leader newsletter
- Interacts with a wide range of staff, business partners, and members

SEARCH TEAM — MSBA STAFF

▪ MARIA SHINABARGER, J.D.

Juris Doctor and educator with over 15 years' experience as a community servant. Maria joined MSBA in 2018.

WORK HISTORY

- Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA): Associate Director of Management Services and Charter School Liaison
- Law Clerk at Hennepin County Attorney's Office
- Cambridge Academy East (Mesa, Arizona): Middle School English Teacher, Director of Professional Development
- Milan C-2 School District (Milan, Missouri): Middle School Reading Teacher

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- Facilitate community, staff, and student input sessions
- Ensure compliance with data privacy statutes by redacting resumes
- Consolidate staff and community responses to surveys and interviews
- Help members interpret state and federal statutes regarding human resources, data practices and contracts

▪ JOEL STENCEL, CPA

Joel has more than 20 years of accounting and auditing experience providing a full range of support services. Joel joined MSBA in 2017.

WORK HISTORY

- Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA): Director of Association Finance
- Eide Bailly LLP: Audit Manager

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- School District Auditor
- Answer and direct phone calls to appropriate parties
- Interact with a wide range of staff, business partners, and members
- Gathers salary information for Districts selected
- Assists with EMD analysis submitted by school board members

SEARCH TEAM — MSBA SERVICE PROVIDERS

▪ LEE WARNE, Ed.S.

Lee has been in education since 1972, including serving as a teacher, coach, high school principal, superintendent, service cooperative executive director, Minnesota Rural Education Association executive director, and Association of Educational Service Agencies executive director. Lee has served at all levels of leadership in local, state, and national organizations. Lee has also received numerous awards at the regional, state, and national levels.

WORK HISTORY

- Greenway Public Schools: Interim Superintendent
- RTR (Russell-Tyler-Ruthton) Schools: Interim Superintendent
- Association of Educational Service Agencies: Executive Director
- MN Rural Education Association: Executive Director
- Lake Benton School: Interim Superintendent
- SW/WC Service Cooperative: Executive Director
- West Central Area Schools: Superintendent
- Norman County West: High School Principal
- Halstad Public School: High School Principal

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- Facilitated over 50 superintendent searches and several district strategic planning sessions
- Provided assistance to school boards and superintendents in various aspects of leadership and training

▪ BRUCE KLAEHN

Bruce has recently retired from 41 years as a Minnesota educator, serving as a teacher, coach, principal, and superintendent, as well as an adjunct college instructor in educational administration. He has extensive experience in financial budgeting, school construction projects, administrative mentoring, and contract negotiations.

WORK HISTORY

- Southeast Service Cooperative: Educational Consultant
- Winona State University: Adjunct Instructor
- Dover-Eyota Public School District: Superintendent
- Grand Meadow Public Schools: Superintendent
- Granada-Huntley-East Chain School District: Principal
- Madelia Public Schools: Teacher and Coach

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- Experience facilitating superintendent searches
- Mentor of new superintendents in southeast Minnesota

SEARCH TEAM — MSBA SERVICE PROVIDERS

▪ PAUL CARLSON

Paul has 39 years of experience in education as a teacher, principal, and superintendent. He is committed to delivering effective guidance for educational excellence to ensure optimal education opportunities for all students.

WORK HISTORY

- ACGC Public Schools: Interim Superintendent (1 year)
- Hancock Public Schools: Part-time Superintendent (5 years)
- New London-Spicer Schools: Superintendent (17 years)
- New London-Spicer Schools: High School Principal
- Sleepy Eye Public Schools: High School Principal
- Sleepy Eye Public Schools: Business Education Teacher

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- Implemented long-range planning and goal-setting processes gathering community input and student achievement data resulting in facilities maintenance and energy project
- Led five successful operating levy campaigns and two successful bond levy campaigns

▪ RENAE TOSTENSON, Ed.S.

Renae has nearly 40 years of experience in education. She has served as superintendent (Lac qui Parle Valley Schools, 2011-2017), principal (Appleton Elementary School, 2007-2011), teacher coach (Lac qui Parle Valley Schools, 2005-2007), and as an elementary school teacher.

WORK HISTORY

- Lac qui Parle Valley Schools: Superintendent
- Lac qui Parle Valley Schools: Principal
- Lac qui Parle Valley Schools: Teacher coach

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- Presenter at MASA and MSBA conferences and workshops
- Facilitated superintendent searches

SEARCH TEAM — MSBA SERVICE PROVIDERS

▪ GARY KUPHAL

Gary has 48 years of experience in education, all but four years in Minnesota. He has served as a high school principal in Henderson, assistant high school principal and middle school principal in La Crescent, and superintendent in Southland, LeRoy-Ostrander, Plainview-Elgin-Millville, and Mabel-Canton.

WORK HISTORY

- Mable-Canton Schools: Superintendent
- La Crescent-Hokah Public Schools: Interim Superintendent
- Kingsland Public Schools: Interim Superintendent
- Southland School District: Superintendent
- LeRoy-Ostrander School District: Superintendent
- Plainview-Elgin-Millville Community Schools: Superintendent
- La Crescent-Hokah Public Schools: Middle School Principal
- Henderson School District: High School Principal
- Henderson School District: Counselor
- Cleveland School District: Counselor
- Union-Whitten School District (Iowa): Teacher

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- Facilitated superintendent searches, board development, and school district strategic planning sessions
- Facilitated community task force on facilities planning

▪ STEVE NIKLAUS

Steve Niklaus brings 43 years of experience in education including serving as superintendent (Annandale Public Schools, 1992-2017) and principal (Annandale High School, 1986-1992, and Atwater-Grove City High Schools, 1980-1986). Steve has served on several state and regional professional boards and committees. Steve has worked in both Minnesota and North Dakota school districts.

WORK HISTORY

- Annandale Public Schools: Superintendent
- Annandale Public Schools: Principal
- Atwater-Grove City High Schools: Principal
- Welcome High School: Principal
- Oakes High School, Oakes, North Dakota: High School Teacher

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- Led six successful operating levy elections and four successful building bond elections
- Experience facilitating with superintendent searches

SEARCH TEAM — MSBA SERVICE PROVIDERS

▪ **BILL TOMHAVE, Ph.D.**

Bill has more than 45 years of extensive experience in education starting as a high school mathematics teacher and including 40 years in higher education involved with teacher preparation. Bill was elected to the Moorhead Area Schools Board of Directors in 2001, serving through 2018, and was honored by MSBA as a member of the All-State School Board in 2015.

WORK HISTORY

- Concordia College, Moorhead, Minnesota: Assistant/Associate/Professor, Mathematics
- University of Minnesota, Morris, Minnesota: Assistant Professor, Mathematics
- Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa: Instructor, Mathematics
- Oregon Consolidated Schools, Wisconsin: Teacher, High School Mathematics

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- Director of Moorhead Area School Board 2002-2018, held positions of Chair, Vice-Chair, and Treasurer
- Board of Directors for Lakes Country Service Cooperative 2007-2018
- Experience assisting with community discussions and candidate screenings and interviews
- Ambassador, Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA), 2006—2009
- Region 1 Joint Powers Board, 2010—2018; Vice Chair 2012—2018

▪ **WENDY SCHOOLMEESTER, Ed.D.**

Wendy has almost four decades of experience in education including elementary teacher, elementary principal, professor of education, and school board member.

WORK HISTORY

- Southwest Minnesota State University (SMSU): Professor of Education, Adjunct Professor, Student Teacher Supervisor
- University of Sioux Falls (USF): Adjunct Professor
- MN Rural Education Association (MREA): Board Member representing Higher Education (2-year appt.)
- Pipestone Area Schools (PAS): School Board Member (5.5 years)/School Board Chair (3 years)
- Russell-Tyler-Ruthton Schools (RTR): Elementary School Principal
- Pipestone/Jasper Schools: Elementary Teacher

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- Served on and chaired several search committees for SMSU
- Guided PAS Superintendent search as board chair
- Presented numerous educational keynotes and sessions locally, state-wide, and internationally
- Collaborated with PAS to begin an Educators Rising Club to address teacher shortage in Minnesota

SEARCH TEAM — MSBA SERVICE PROVIDERS

▪ KATE MAGUIRE, Ed.D.

Dr. Maguire is a proven system leader focused on improving academic outcomes for all students by building shared vision for work; establishing trust through effective and collaborative relationships; driving for instructional excellence; creating safe, healthy, and responsive work and learning environments; and creating systems of accountability and continuous improvement. Dr. Maguire was honored as Minnesota's Superintendent of the Year by MASA in 2014, and she holds a Doctor of Education in Education Leadership from the University of St. Thomas, as well as an Education Specialist degree and Master of Arts degree.

WORK HISTORY

- Concordia University: Contracted Faculty of Practice
- St. Louis Park Public Schools: Interim Superintendent
- Anoka Hennepin Schools: Interim Superintendent
- Osseo Area Schools
 - ◇ Superintendent
 - ◇ Assistant Superintendent
 - ◇ Director, Curriculum, Instruction * Educational Standards
 - ◇ Director, Human Resources
 - ◇ Principal
 - ◇ Assistant Principal
 - ◇ Assistant Administrator
 - ◇ Teacher, Social Studies

▪ JOHN WARD, J.D., Ph.D

Dr. Ward holds 30+ years of experience in Minnesota public education, with his last 25 spent working for the Mounds View Public School District. There he served in a variety of leadership roles, finishing his career as Assistant Superintendent. John also holds a bachelor's degree in political science from St. John's, his Juris Doctorate from William Mitchell College of Law, and a Ph.D from the University of Minnesota.

WORK HISTORY

- MN School Boards Assoc. (MSBA): Associate Director of Leadership Development & Executive Search
- Mounds View Public Schools
 - ◇ Assistant Superintendent
 - ◇ Director of H.R. and Operations
 - ◇ Director of Secondary Schools
 - ◇ General Counsel/Assistant to the Superintendent

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- Led MSBA executive searches, assisted in evaluation and goal-setting and conflict resolution strategies
- Leadership team participant in district strategic planning, implementation and assessment initiatives
- Negotiation of over twenty labor contracts with teachers and other bargaining groups
- Leadership of district/community task force groups in facilities, community education and athletics

SEARCH TEAM — MSBA SERVICE PROVIDERS

▪ **CONNIE HAYES**

Connie has 40 years of experience in education, including 23 years as a superintendent. She retired from Northeast Metro 916 after 15 years. During her educational career, Connie also served in coordinator positions and as a school psychologist. While working in the private sector she advised districts on public financing.

WORK HISTORY

- Northeast Metro 916 Intermediate School District: Superintendent
- Springsted: Vice-President
- La Crescent-Hokah Public Schools: Superintendent
- McGregor Independent School District #4: Superintendent
- Lynd Public School District and Marshall Public Schools: Superintendent and Curriculum Coordinator
- SW/WC ECSU: Coordinator and School Psychologist

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- Provided leadership in district strategic planning and goal-setting processes
- Built consensus across participating school districts in a long-range facility planning, financing, and construction of three specialized facilities for unique learners
- Facilitated construction of a major addition to a secondary building and improved district finances

▪ **BERNADEIA H. JOHNSON, Ed.D.**

Dr. Johnson's extensive background includes leadership roles in several districts in Minnesota and Tennessee ranging from 36,000 to 125, 000 PK-12 students. Her last district position was serving as Superintendent of Minneapolis Public Schools. Recent work includes coaching school principals and superintendents, teaching, advising, and researching leadership and school district policies that impact students' mental health and academic achievement across Minnesota. She has been a keynote speaker, panelist, and presenter, and has served on local and national Boards to promote education as a public good. She teaches in the graduate school, in the administrative licensure graduate program, and advises doctoral students through the Department of Educational Leadership at Minnesota State University, Mankato, Twin Cities Campus. Bernadeia received her doctorate in Educational Leadership from the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, and her undergraduate degree from Alabama A & M University. Today, Bernadeia turns her efforts to speaking on her experience living with Stage Five kidney disease and the importance of prevention of kidney disease. She received a kidney transplant in April 2024.

SUPERINTENDENT EXPERIENCE

- Minneapolis Public Schools
 - ◇ Superintendent of Schools
 - ◇ Deputy Superintendent of Schools/Chief Academic Officer
- Memphis City Schools
 - ◇ Deputy Superintendent of Schools

SEARCH TEAM — MSBA SERVICE PROVIDERS

▪ MARK ZUZEK

Mark holds a commitment to ensure quality educational leadership occurs in each school district. This means that staff will be supported to do their jobs well, and students will enjoy meaningful interactions with caring, well-prepared, creative, and enthusiastic staff. Mark has served as both a superintendent of schools as well as a school board member, giving him a unique perspective on the superintendent search process.

WORK HISTORY

- Hastings Public School Board: current member and Treasurer
- Intermediate School District 917 School Board: current Director
- Intermediate School District 917: Superintendent
- Hastings Public Schools: Middle School Principal
- Hastings Public Schools: Assistant Middle School Principal
- South Saint Paul High School: Assistant Principal

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- Responsible for the leadership of over 500 employees assigned to 27 programs across 18 physical sites
- Served the needs of nine school districts across Dakota County and Bloomington
- Collaborated with St. Thomas University to develop and manage a unique licensure program that provided a pathway for paraprofessionals to attain their license while working full-time

▪ JOSH PAULY

Josh has 13 years of experience in education. He completed Georgetown's McCourt School of Public Policy Education Finance program, Minnesota's Education Policy Fellowship program, and was a Fellow at the Center for Policy Design. During his educational career, Josh served as a teacher and school board member. While working in the private sector he advised companies on partnerships and solutioning for K-12 schools and nonprofits. He also mentors school board members across the country through School Board Fellows and co-founded the Get on Board Minnesota program. He received the University of MN's Rising Alumni Award in 2018.

WORK HISTORY

- Get on Board Minnesota: Co-Founder
- Future Focused Solutions: Director of Strategic Partnerships
- Books on Wings: Executive Director
- Minneapolis Public Schools: School Board member (Chair of Policy Committee & Supt Evaluation Committee)
- People Sourced Policy: Executive Director
- Minneapolis Public Schools: Teacher

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- Created a leadership development program to support individuals as they consider running for school board.
- Developed school board policies, created an evaluation tool with metrics for board members to use with their superintendent, and provided leadership in district strategic planning and goal-setting processes.

SEARCH TEAM — MSBA SERVICE PROVIDERS

▪ ERICK ENGER

Erick has 37 years of experience serving in public education, all in Minnesota school districts. He has held a variety of positions, including interim superintendent, superintendent, principal, coach, and teacher.

WORK HISTORY

- Plainview-Elgin-Millville Schools: Interim Superintendent
- Lake City Public Schools: Superintendent
- Zumbrota-Mazeppa Schools: Teacher, Coach / Principal
- West Concord Public Schools: Teacher and Coach
- Albert Lea Schools: Teacher and Coach

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- Successfully ran and passed both operating and building referendums.
- Completed strategic planning processes in several school districts.
- Served as both a principal and superintendent mentor.
- Oversaw two superintendent searches as the district point of contact for the search firm.

▪ HEIDI HAHN

Heidi holds 30+ years of dedicated experience in public education as a passionate and driven educational leader committed to empowering and positively impacting those she serves. Her career has been marked by leadership positions, including Director of Special Education and Superintendent, where she championed inclusive and innovative practices. Heidi thrives on fostering environments where every student and educator can succeed, and she is deeply invested in the continual growth and improvement of our educational systems. Heidi strongly believes in collaboration and connection as ways to make a meaningful difference in the world of education.

WORK HISTORY

- Sourcewell: Associate Director of Special Education
- Brainerd Public Schools: Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent
- Paul Bunyan Education Cooperative: Director, Assistant Director
- St. Cloud State University: Adjunct Faculty - Education Administration and Leadership
- Brainerd Public Schools: Special Education EBD Teacher
- Brainerd Public Schools: Counselor

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- Education Administration and Leadership licensure
- District and public agency strategic planning sessions
- School and non-profit board development
- PELSB Board Member - tiered licensure system

THANK YOU

Thank you for considering MSBA's executive search services. On behalf of our entire team, we would be honored to assist Northfield Public Schools with its upcoming superintendent search and wish you all the best moving forward in your process.

Please reach out if you would like additional information.

Sincerely,



Barb Dorn

MSBA Director of Leadership Development and Executive Search



MINNESOTA SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

EXECUTIVE SEARCH SERVICES

Empower your board. Hire with confidence.



MINNESOTA SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

EXECUTIVE SEARCH SERVICES

Northfield Public Schools
February 23, 2026



Lessons Learned in Superintendent Search

There's no magic. Every search firm will:

- Create a leadership profile
- Offer public engagement opportunities
- Advertise the position
- Recruit candidates
- Vet applicants
- Recommend finalists
- Facilitate the interview process

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Search methodologies must evolve with the times

Innovation and adaptability are crucial in today's environment

Transparency is the most important component of any search

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Search methodologies must evolve with the times

Innovation and adaptability are crucial in today's environment

Transparency is the most important component of any search

- Create a leadership profile
- Offer public engagement opportunities
- Advertise the position
- Recruit candidates
- Vet applicants
- Recommend finalists
- Facilitate the interview process

Why MSBA?

Key points

- Lens of school board leadership
- Transparency and communication
- Firm bandwidth
- No hidden fees
- Post-hiring support
- Unparalleled depth of Minnesota knowledge
- Most importantly, we understand and believe in school boards

Why MSBA?

This year

- Aitkin
- Benson
- Brainerd
- Crookston
- Edina
- Hinckley-Finlayson
- Hopkins
- Inver Grove Heights
- Jackson Co Central
- Pillager
- St. Louis County
- Stewartville
- Wayzata

Last year

- Albert Lea
- BOLD
- Burnsville-Eagan-Savage
- Byron
- Crosby-Ironton
- Eden Valley Watkins
- Elk River
- Hastings
- Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted
- Kasson-Mantorville
- Kelliher
- La Crescent-Hokah
- Lake of the Woods
- Lynd
- MACCRAY

Last year, cont.

- Mahnomen
- McGregor
- Melrose
- Montevideo
- Nevis
- Northland
- Northwest Service Co-op
- Plainview-Elgin-Millville
- Proctor
- Red Lake County Central
- Red Lake Falls
- St. Croix Prep Academy
- St. James
- St. Peter
- Worthington

Questions are welcome.

I appreciated all the great information provided to board members, along with the option to have a 1:1 discussion with MSBA about any potential concerns / questions regarding the candidates or search process. I thought the search went very well.

- Board Chair, Hastings

MSBA has deep knowledge on all topics. This was a unique search in that three of our board members were brand new and had no training. MSBA was up to date on all laws which the board needed to follow, and going through this process helped our board become more unified.

- Board Member, Melrose Area

We were given access to all application materials, which wasn't the case with the search firm we used three years ago.

- Board Member, Sartell-Stephen

MSBA was top notch every step of the way. They were responsive, supportive, and I felt comfortable asking them anything. I believe MSBA was the perfect guide for our board to ensure legal compliance and operate with the utmost integrity.

- Board Member, Kasson-Mantorville

THANK YOU
www.mnmsba.org

2026-27 Capital and Long Term Facilities Maintenance Fund Proposed Budget | 2.9.26 | Narrative

Val Mertesdorf, Director of Finance

"We prepare **every** student for lifelong success by developing critical thinkers who are curious and ready to engage in our society."

What is Capital?

Our capital budget is a segment of our general fund budget that we present separately as required by the Minnesota Department of Education. Our capital budget has four revenue components:

- 1) Operating Capital – must be used for equipment and facility needs. The calculation is \$79 per adjusted pupil unit plus \$109 multiplied by our average building age. We receive approximately \$221 per pupil unit. This formula is a mix of levy and state aid.
- 2) Lease Levy – this is a levy source of revenue to pay for rent of leased facilities. The calculation for our total authority is \$212 per pupil unit. Northfield has a cap of approximately \$839,000. We currently utilize about 50% of this revenue.
- 3) Capital Levy – this is a voter approved levy. This is used to support technology, curriculum and facilities. The voters authorized a renewal and increase of this levy in November 2022.
- 4) Long Term Facilities Maintenance (LTFM) – The formula is a combination of aid and levy. This funding is for capital expenditures and maintenance projects necessary to prevent further erosion of facilities. The calculation is \$380 per pupil unit, pro-rated based on average building age.

The Capital and Long Term Facilities Maintenance programs have restricted expenditure categories. This means that MN State Statute dictates what we can spend the money on. We **cannot** use either operating capital or LTFM for salaries/benefits. The exception to this is funding for technology services staff only. These funding streams are intended to support technology, curriculum, facilities, and infrastructure needs. Each program also has a restricted fund balance category. This means if we don't spend all of our revenue in a given year, the remainder is set aside for only these types of expenditures in the future. Each year in December, we project our capital revenue and if there is a projected surplus, the capital committee prioritizes needs and comes to consensus on how to allocate the remaining funds.

Projected Revenue

For the 2026-27 school year, the voter approved capital projects levy is our largest source of revenue at 45%. LTFM and Operating Capital are the next largest with 27% and 18%, respectively. Our total capital revenue is projected to be \$4,867,158, which is a decrease from the 2025-26 school year. In 2026-27, we will not have devices to sell which is the main driver behind the decrease in revenue. Incremental declining enrollment continues to slowly erode what we have available as well.

Projected Expenditures

We are projecting capital expenditures of approximately \$4,502,686. The most notable change to the expenditure projection is the addition of software licenses. This budget amount includes both instructional and non-instructional software licenses that were in the general fund but were reallocated to operating capital as part of the priority based budget reduction process last spring. This shift, while providing stability for the general fund, does limit the amount available for discretionary allocation across the district.

Technology leases decreased slightly with the new staff laptop lease. This budget also includes a 24-hour-per-day cybersecurity monitoring service that we started in the 2023-24 school year. It is evident that this service will be a long-term protection against the potential risk of data breaches.

As stated before, on-going salaries and benefits are not eligible expenses in these restricted funds. However, the staff cost for technicians servicing the equipment/network that operating capital pays for is allowable. The \$700,585 is a direct savings to the general fund and aligns with what we told the voters we would do with this funding.

The capital committee approved a few expenditures for the 2026-27 school year, including replacement of the oldest playground at Bridgewater, updating a portion of the staff iPad fleet, replacing a mower, and purchasing a new UV controller for the pool.

LTFM is funding that can only be used to repair or replace existing building features to prevent deterioration. The Minnesota Department of Education determines the categories of allowable spending shown on slide 7. We anticipate using LTFM to add a poured in place surface at Bridgewater with the updated playground to improve accessibility for all students, updating bathrooms at NCEC and Bridgewater, replacing several doors at the Middle School, and replacing hand washing stations at Spring Creek. In addition, LTFM covers annual safety inspections, protective gear, and annual flooring replacement allocations.

Financial Summary

At the end of 2026-27 we are projecting that the operating capital fund balance will be \$265,560. The LTFM fund balance is projected to be \$1,144,480. Our fund balance goal is to maintain a minimum of \$200,000 in operating capital and \$600,000 in LTFM. I anticipate both restricted funds to be financially stable.

LTFM 10 Year Plan

The LTFM funding has a ten-year plan that the board approves each year. Based on the funding available and projects listed, Director of Buildings and Grounds Justin Raabolle and myself prioritize projects and set the expenditures for the year. For fiscal year 2026-27 we plan do some routine tuckpoint/caulking, the poured in place playground surface, bathroom updates, building maintenance system updates, and a variety of other projects and annual inspections.

We are fortunate to live in a community that supports public education when the state fails to do so properly. We will continue to allocate our resources as effectively and efficiently as possible to ensure our facilities are adequately maintained and our students and staff have access to the necessary technology and tools to continue providing a world-class education.

2026-27 PROPOSED BUDGET

Operating Capital & Long Term Facilities Maintenance



New playground at Spring Creek

Reaching Out, Reaching Up:

THE 2027 STRATEGIC PLAN



VISION

We prepare every student for lifelong success by developing critical thinkers who are curious and ready to engage in our society.

BENCHMARKS

<p>1</p> <p>All children are ready for kindergarten.</p>	<p>2</p> <p>All students are connected to the community.</p>	<p>3</p> <p>All students are at grade level in reading and mathematics by the end of third and sixth grades.</p>
<p>4</p> <p>All students exhibit physical, social and emotional well-being.</p>	<p>5</p> <p>All students have a connection with a caring adult beyond their parents as they transition to middle school.</p>	<p>6</p> <p>All students have interests, goals and a vision for the future by the end of eighth grade.</p>
<p>7</p> <p>All students graduate from high school with a plan to reach their full potential.</p>	<p>8</p> <p>All employees report satisfaction in the workplace.</p>	<p>9</p> <p>All parents report satisfaction with their children's educational experience.</p>
<p>10</p> <p>The district maintains 14% of its annual expenditures in its unassigned fund balance to ensure financial stability.</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Community education provides relevant and accessible learning opportunities for all residents.</p>	<p><small>Note: The first seven benchmarks are aligned with the language identified by Northfield Promise, a collective impact consortium of 20 community organizations committed to helping Northfield's youth thrive "from cradle to career."</small></p>

STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS



People

We prioritize the engagement, satisfaction, and support of every student, staff member, and family.



Learner Outcomes

We prepare every student to be academically and socially ready to choose their preferred pathway after high school graduation.



Equity

We ensure that every child has a fair opportunity to reach their full potential.



Communication

We communicate effectively and transparently with all stakeholders.



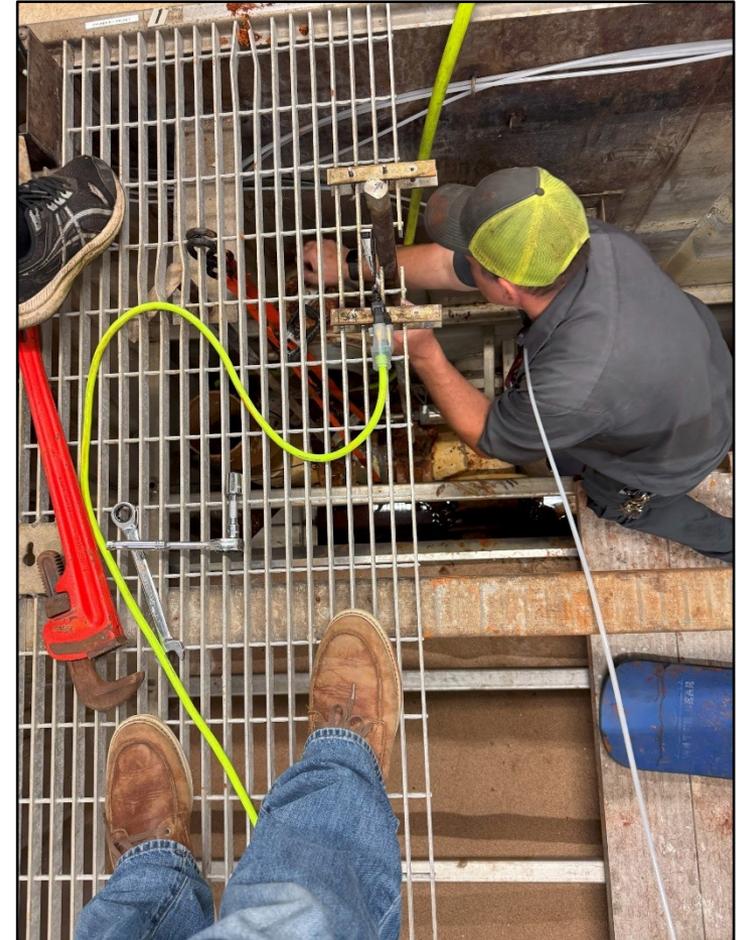
Stewardship

We responsibly manage our personnel, finances, property, time and environmental impact.



Partnerships

We seek community partnerships that accelerate student achievement of district benchmarks.

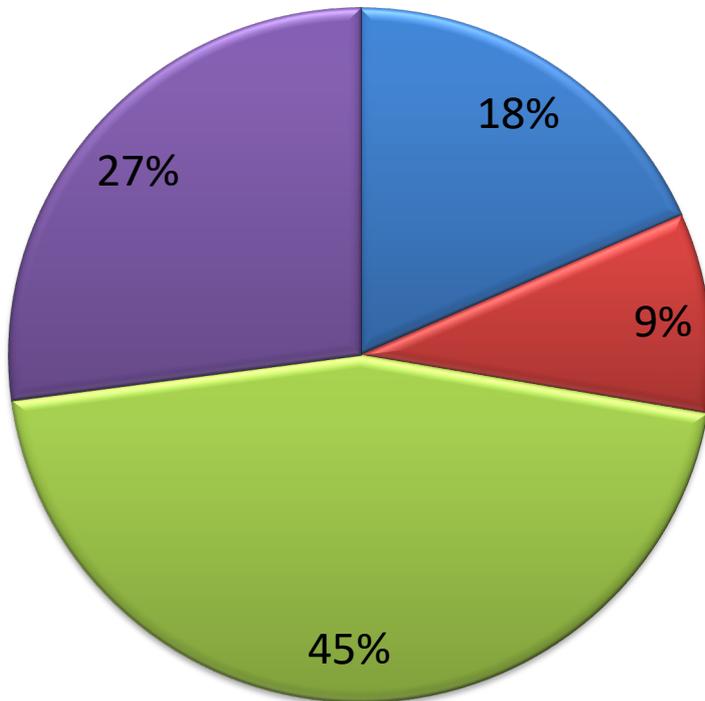


What is Capital and LTFM?

- The capital budget consists of 4 revenue streams:
 - Operating Capital – levy/aid formula
 - Lease Levy – levy for certain lease commitments
 - Capital Levy – voter approved levy
 - Long Term Facility Maintenance – funding for repairs and maintenance of facilities
- The budgets are included in the general fund
- Restricted expenditures
- Fund Balance restriction
- There is a portion of the operating capital money each year that is prioritized by the capital committee – this committee meets to discuss building and district priorities and comes to consensus on the proposed spending

Capital and LTFM Sources

\$4,867,158



■ Operating Capital
\$894,908

■ Lease Levy
\$453,214

■ Capital Levy
\$2,200,227

■ Long Term Facilities
Maintenance
\$1,318,809

Revenue Summary

	2023-24 Audit Results	2024-25 Audit Results	2025-26 Revised Budget	2026-27 Proposed Budget
Revenue Summary				
Operating Capital	\$ 767,594	\$ 766,619	\$ 918,552	\$ 894,908
Capital Projects Levy	\$ 750,000	\$ 1,906,488	\$ 2,122,886	\$ 2,200,227
Lease Levy	\$ 382,517	\$ 403,539	\$ 451,576	\$ 453,214
Long Term Facility Maintenance	\$ 1,289,635	\$ 1,398,332	\$ 1,279,679	\$ 1,318,809
Sale of Equipment/Rebates	\$ 412,413	\$ 9,200	\$ 180,000	\$ -
Total Revenues	\$ 3,602,159	\$ 4,484,178	\$ 4,952,693	\$ 4,867,158



Expenditure Summary

	2023-24 Audit Results	2024-25 Audit Results	2025-26 Revised Budget	2026-27 Proposed Budget
Expenditure Summary				
Leased Facility Space/Assessments	\$ 346,253	\$ 385,033	\$ 435,996	\$ 463,214
Lease Purchase Agreement	\$ 212,352	\$ 140,972	\$ 69,592	\$ 69,592
Building/Program Allocation	\$ 118,395	\$ 155,070	\$ 163,273	\$ 165,183
Textbooks/Digital Curriculum	\$ 354,470	\$ 400,924	\$ 500,000	\$ 425,000
Technology Leases	\$ 595,052	\$ 540,240	\$ 735,340	\$ 730,690
Software Licenses	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 433,012	\$ 441,672
Network Administration	\$ 436,143	\$ 656,114	\$ 670,416	\$ 700,585
Capital Committee Recommendations	\$ 140,577	\$ 856,386	\$ 750,000	\$ 300,000
Long Term Facility Maintenance	\$ 908,860	\$ 922,721	\$ 1,289,150	\$ 1,206,750
Total Expenditures	\$ 3,112,102	\$ 4,057,460	\$ 5,046,779	\$ 4,502,686

Items of Note:

- Addition of software license (instructional and non-instructional) was an approved priority based budget recommendation to shift eligible software licensing fees to operating capital from the general fund.

LTFM Expenditures

CATEGORY	2023-24 Audit Results	2024-25 Audit Results	2025-26 Revised Budget	2026-27 Proposed Budget
347 - Physical Hazards	\$ 53,833	\$ 29,533	\$ 374,450	\$ 93,000
349 - Other Haz. Materials	1,300	8,234	9,000	57,000
352 - Environmental H&S	138,287	151,845	112,250	113,550
358 - Asbestos Removal	6,580	7,195	31,950	57,000
363 - Fire Safety	41,453	47,102	64,500	44,200
366 - Indoor Air Quality	2,032	2,073	-	-
367 - Accessibility	-	11,926	-	-
368 - Building Envelope	25,167	955	185,000	70,000
369 - Bldg Hrdwr & Equip	6,533	152,599	60,000	10,000
370 - Electrical	40,359	-	-	-
379 - Interior Surfaces	178,465	181,914	230,000	380,000
380 - Mechanical Systems	244,937	279,056	85,000	85,000
381 - Plumbing	-	37,031	-	-
382 - Professional Services	41,601	300	-	-
383 - Roofing	13,500	-	-	-
384 - Site Projects	114,813	12,958	137,000	297,000
TOTAL	\$ 908,860	\$ 922,721	\$ 1,289,150	\$ 1,206,750

Projects for 2026-27

Capital Recommendations

- Replace playground at BW
- Staff iPad replacements
- New mower
- UV Controller for pool

LTFM

- Poured in place playground surface at BW
- Update staff bathrooms at NCEC
- New restroom partitions at BW
- MS Door replacement (4)
- Replace hand wash stations at SC

Financial Summary

	2023-24 Audit Results	2024-25 Audit Results	2025-26 Revised Budget	2026-27 Proposed Budget
Fund Summary				
Beginning Balance	\$ 603,654	\$ 1,093,711	\$ 1,520,429	\$ 1,426,343
Revenue	\$ 3,602,159	\$ 4,484,178	\$ 4,952,693	\$ 4,867,158
Expenditures	\$ 3,112,102	\$ 4,057,460	\$ 5,046,779	\$ 4,502,686
Ending Balance	\$ 1,093,711	\$ 1,520,429	\$ 1,426,343	\$ 1,790,815
Operating Capital	\$ 146,655	\$ 97,762	\$ 13,147	\$ 265,560
Long Term Facility Maintenance	\$ 947,056	\$ 1,041,892	\$ 1,032,421	\$ 1,144,480
Ending Fund Balance	\$ 1,093,711	\$ 1,139,654	\$ 1,045,568	\$ 1,410,040

Fund Balance Goal

- Operating Capital: minimum of \$200,000
- LTFM: minimum of \$600,000

LTFM 10 Year Plan

	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Revenue	\$ 1,279,679	\$ 1,318,809	\$ 1,279,648	\$ 1,281,748	\$ 1,284,058
Expenditures	\$ 1,289,150	\$ 1,206,750	\$ 1,181,600	\$ 883,600	\$ 903,750
Difference	\$ (9,471)	\$ 112,059	\$ 98,048	\$ 398,148	\$ 380,308
Beginning Fund Balance	\$ 1,041,892	\$ 1,032,421	\$ 1,144,480	\$ 1,242,528	\$ 1,640,676
Ending Fund Balance	\$ 1,032,421	\$ 1,144,480	\$ 1,242,528	\$ 1,640,676	\$ 2,020,983
	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035
Revenue	\$ 1,286,578	\$ 1,285,318	\$ 1,284,163	\$ 1,297,004	\$ 1,309,974
Expenditures	\$ 946,850	\$ 549,200	\$ 495,100	\$ 327,950	\$ 357,800
Difference	\$ 339,728	\$ 736,118	\$ 789,063	\$ 969,054	\$ 952,174
Beginning Fund Balance	\$ 2,020,983	\$ 2,360,711	\$ 3,096,829	\$ 3,885,892	\$ 4,854,946
Ending Fund Balance	\$ 2,360,711	\$ 3,096,829	\$ 3,885,892	\$ 4,854,946	\$ 5,807,120

Stewardship Spotlight

District Wide LED Project

- Original proposal for LED Retrofit was nearly \$1 million with a 9-year payback.
- The Buildings & Grounds team chose to replace all the light bulbs in the district with in-house staff rather than a full retrofit.
- 14,000 LED Tubes!!!
- Net cost to the district after energy rebates = \$85,000
- 9-month return on investment estimate



Stewardship

We responsibly manage our personnel, finances, property, time and environmental impact.

Questions?



Thank you!

IEA, INC.

NORTHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS



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Management Plan for Indoor Air Quality

Northfield Public Schools

Management Plan for Indoor Air Quality

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Appendices:

- A Indoor Air Quality Walkthrough Reports
- B Annual Notification Documentation
- C Indoor Air Quality Assessment Reports

Contact Person: Justin Raabolle

Phone Number: 507-645-3435

Email Address: jraabolle@northfieldschools.org

Northfield Public Schools* Annual Review Form *Management Plan for Indoor Air Quality

Certification

I certify that I have reviewed the information provided and accept this written management plan. With assistance from our EHS consultant, the District will implement the policies and procedures noted within this plan. The written plan is a working document that will be reviewed and revised annually, or as needed.

Justin Raabolle _____ *Justin Raabolle* _____ 2/4/2026 _____
 Print Name Signature Date

Program reviews and follow-up of program-related issues are documented below.

Date	Actions/Comments	Reviewed by:
02/04/2021	Created new version with updated policy	Cassie Bowser, IEA
2/8/2022	Updated contact person	Cassie Bowser, IEA
02/24/23	Annual review – no change	Cassie Bowser, IEA
02/02/24	Annual review – no changes	Cassie Bowser, IEA
02/06/25	Annual review - no changes	Cassie Bowser, IEA
02/04/26	Annual review – no changes	Cassie Bowser, IEA

1.0 Introduction

Good quality indoor air contributes to a favorable learning environment for students, productivity for teachers and staff, and a sense of comfort, health, and well-being for all school occupants. This management plan describes procedures and guidelines relating to indoor air quality (IAQ) for Northfield Public Schools and references the Tools for Schools Action Kit from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

2.0 Responsibilities

The program coordinator, or designee, is responsible for the following:

- Oversee the implementation of the management plan
- Provide resources needed to implement the plan
- Determine when outside professional assistance is needed
- Ensure the annual notification to staff, students and parents is completed
- Register IAQ questions from staff, students, and parents

3.0 Communication

The management plan for IAQ and other related reports are located at the District Office with the District's health and safety programs.

A statement is distributed annually via the school website, informing the staff, students, and parents about the location of the management plan for Indoor Air Quality and how to contact the IAQ coordinator. This information is documented with this program.

4.0 Procedures for Handling IAQ Concerns and Remediation

The following describes the process to be implemented if a building occupant is concerned about IAQ:

- A person who has concerns about IAQ contacts the building principal or head custodian in their building for reporting and assistance with concerns.
- After reviewing the situation, the building custodian will investigate to try to resolve the problem internally. If the concern cannot be alleviated, the building custodian will notify the IAQ coordinator, and a questionnaire may be provided to the affected person. The completed questionnaire will be returned to the IAQ coordinator.
- The IAQ coordinator will review the questionnaire and contact the appropriate outside firm to help investigate and/or remediate the problem, if deemed necessary.
- Remediation will be conducted and may require an outside contractor.
- The IAQ coordinator, or designated consultant, will communicate with the initiating party during the process of investigating and remediating the issue.

Northfield Public Schools may have an IAQ assessment and sampling performed in an area in response to symptoms experienced by a staff member or student. If the assessment and sampling does not identify a condition or concern that might account for the symptoms experienced by an individual, involvement of a physician is often warranted as the next step. It is recommended that an allergist or other specialist (not a general physician) conduct the examination and help to determine if there are specific triggers or allergens that might be affecting the individual. The specialist may show that the individual is sensitive to or affected by low levels of a specific contaminant that does not usually affect the general population. If a specific trigger or contaminant is identified, further sampling might then be warranted.

5.0 Building Walkthroughs

Building walkthrough inspections are completed annually to identify potential IAQ issues. The walkthrough is modeled after the EPA Tools for Schools checklists and reports of walkthroughs are located in Appendix A. The walkthrough uses sight, sound, and smell to assess if there are obvious water intrusion problems (interior and exterior), obvious ventilation failures and/or problems, obvious building/structural failures and/or problems, overall cleanliness of buildings and classrooms, and operations and maintenance programs. It is intended to be a quick overall assessment of each room of obvious problems that may impact indoor air quality. The reports are reviewed by the IAQ coordinator or designee, who will then take appropriate action to address problems that were identified.

6.0 Indoor Air Quality Teacher Surveys

An IAQ survey may be distributed annually to provide an avenue for reporting any IAQ concerns and to inform employees on what they can do to improve IAQ in their own areas. The survey may cover the following topics: animals, thermal comfort, ventilation, building maintenance, moisture concerns and general cleanliness.

The IAQ coordinator reviews the surveys, and any concerns discovered are addressed. The surveys may be completed online, and a final report is maintained with the management plan.

7.0 Ventilation Assessments

A ventilation assessment is completed each year by the head engineers or designated consultant. The ventilation assessment is maintained with this program and covers the following topics:

- Outdoor Air Intakes
- System Cleanliness
- Control for Outdoor Air Supply
- Air Distribution
- Exhaust Systems

8.0 Facility Cleanliness

The current maintenance program involves vacuuming carpeted rooms and dusting regularly. Dusting personal items is the responsibility of the classroom teacher. A deep cleaning of furniture and flooring is conducted in each room over the summer break.

The district maintains a routine heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) inspection and maintenance program that includes coil and drain pan cleaning and inspection, adjustment of motor operators and dampers, regular filter changes, unit cleaning, and checking of damper controls and settings.

9.0 Related Guidelines

9.1 Animals in the Classroom

The goal of the IAQ program is to decrease student and staff exposure to potentially harmful animal allergens. Bringing animals into buildings should be discouraged. If animals are to be allowed in the classroom, the protocol will be as follows:

- Before bringing an animal into the building, the teacher will ask the principal for permission. The principal will consult with facilities staff.
- All animals are required to be properly vaccinated.
- The location of the habitat for the animal will include consideration of HVAC components. Animal habitats will not be placed near air supply or return air vents and will not be kept near unit ventilators. The habitat will be placed on a hard floor surface. The animal will not be allowed to wander around the room (especially on carpet).

- A cleaning schedule will be implemented for the habitat and surrounding area. The classroom teacher is responsible for regularly cleaning the cage, as well as the table or floor the cage rests on. Students will not be allowed to clean cages or equipment.
- The teacher will always be present when animals are handled by a student.
- All staff and students will wash their hands before and after handling animals, cage debris, or animal supplies.
- Concerns regarding the health issues or care of the animal should be brought to the building principal for immediate consideration.

9.2 Pest Management

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a coordinated approach to pest control using the most cost-effective means to prevent unacceptable levels of pests, while causing the least possible hazard to people, property, and the environment. IPM uses a combination of methods that include:

- Reducing or not allowing food or snacks in the classroom, especially when the room is carpeted
- Inspection and monitoring of pest population sites
- Managing waste by keeping refuse in tight containers and locating waste containers away from buildings, if possible
- Maintaining structures (fixing leaking pipes promptly, sealing cracks)
- Adding physical barriers to pest entry and movement (screens for chimneys, doors, and windows)
- Modifying habitats (removing clutter, relocating outside light fixtures away from doors)
- Using traps (light traps, snap traps, and glue boards)
- Using pesticides judiciously

9.3 Food Services

Cooking activities generate odors, moisture, food waste, and other trash, which, if not managed carefully, can lead to IAQ problems. The district ensures the following precautions are taken:

Cooking Area

- The exhaust fans are inspected to make sure they are working properly. If problems are noted, the building custodian is contacted.
- Exhaust fans are operational whenever cooking, washing dishes, or cleaning.
- Any leaks or odors of combustion gas are reported immediately to the building custodian.
- The kitchen is cleaned after use as required by the district and Department of Health policy.
- Signs of mold, mildew, or algae are reported to the building custodian.
- Pest problems are reported to the building custodian.

Food Handling and Storage

- Food service areas are regularly checked for signs of insects or vermin.
- Food handling and storage practices followed are as recommended by the District and the Department of Health.
- General cleanliness is maintained.

Waste Management

- The district's policy of recycling waste is followed.
- Waste is stored in appropriate sealed containers.
- Dumpsters are located away from air intake vents and operable windows.

9.4 Latex

Latex allergy is a reaction to certain proteins in latex rubber. The amount of latex exposure needed to produce sensitization, or an allergic reaction is unknown. Increasing exposure to latex proteins increases the risk of developing allergic symptoms. In sensitized people, symptoms usually begin within minutes of exposure; but they can occur hours later and can be quite varied. Mild reactions to latex involve skin redness, rash, hives, or itching. More severe reactions may involve respiratory symptoms such as runny nose, sneezing, itchy eyes, scratchy throat, and asthma (difficult breathing, coughing spells, and wheezing). *

Because gloves and balloons are the most common and accessible sources of latex, the district has chosen to prohibit their use in District buildings. If an employee or student has a severe latex allergy, other forms of latex will be assessed in that building.

* *Information from NIOSH Publication #98-113: Latex Allergy, A Prevention Guide.*

9.5 Fragrances

Exposure to fragrances and scents can cause some staff and/or students to experience asthma or allergic reactions, including upper respiratory irritation, headaches, and other symptoms. All District employees are encouraged to use personal products (such as perfume, cologne, after-shave, hairspray, and body lotion) that are low odor or fragrance free. In addition, the district selects maintenance and cleaning products that are low in odor.

As a district policy, essential oils may not be used as follows:

- In diffusers
- Applied to any student, even if the parent requests staff to administer, without a Health Care Provider order
- In professional development sessions
- Any circumstance that is disruptive or puts another's health at risk

If essential oils are found:

- In diffusers:
 - Diffuser is removed and disposed of properly
- On students/staff which are disruptive or putting another's health at risk
 - Do not use water to wash off as it may increase irritation by spreading oils.
 - Offer clean clothing, as needed and as available

10.0 Annual Review

The Northfield Public Schools IAQ coordinator, along with a designated safety consultant, reviews the IAQ plan on an annual basis. Changes to the plan are identified on the annual review form found at the beginning of this plan.

Appendix A

*Indoor Air Quality Walkthrough Reports and
Teacher Surveys
(Maintained in the District Office)*

Appendix B

Annual Notification Documentation

Linked on website:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Z_YdTRz97m0_kR2P-dslyLszTOj1jgMi/view

Appendix C

*Indoor Air Quality Assessment Reports
(Maintained in the District Office)*

Northfield Public Schools | Policy Committee Recommendations

February 9, 2026

Policy	Changes
410.1: Minnesota Paid Leave	<p>Change Type: New Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This policy will provide guidance for the district on the Minnesota Paid Leave program.
426: Employee Assistance Program	<p>Change Type: Sunset</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As of Jan. 1, 2026, we no longer have an EAP. Recommendation to sunset this policy.
502: Search of Student Lockers, Desks, Personal Possessions and Student's Person	<p>Change Type: Regular Review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added a statement to address the scope of an inspection in section IV.B. Updated purpose statement. In section IV.D clarified that a person being searched may request the search be conducted by a school official of the gender the person being searched prefers. In section III.E. updated the definition of designee. In section IV. H removed the statement regarding providing a copy of this policy to each student who uses a locker and linked the Student Citizenship Handbook. In section V.B. updated sentence for clarity. In section VII linked the Student Citizenship Handbook. Update of legal reference.
527: Student Use and Parking of Motor Vehicles: Patrols, Inspection and Searches	<p>Change Type: Regular Review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In section IV. A, added, "Students may be required to pay a fee to park their vehicle during the school day." In section VII, added link to the Student Citizenship Handbook. Removed underlines from headings and bolded them instead.
528: Student Parental, Family and Marital Status Nondiscrimination	<p>Change Type: Regular Review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Linked Policy 522 in section II.H. Removed end of section II.F: was a repetition of the beginning of section II.G.

Policy 410.1 MINNESOTA PAID LEAVE

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide for family and medical leave to Northfield School District employees in accordance with Minnesota Paid Leave (MNPL).

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. The district provides time off to eligible employees who qualify for MNPL benefits as required under Minnesota law. The district is a participant in the State of Minnesota's paid leave program. MNPL benefits are funded through premium contributions payable to the State of Minnesota.
- B. The premium cost will be split between the district and employee as follows: The district will pay 50% of the required premium, and employees will pay 50% of the premium cost through payroll deductions starting January 1, 2026.

III. TYPES OF LEAVE

The State of Minnesota may approve MNPL leave for the following conditions in a benefit year:

- A. **Medical Leave.** Eligible employees are entitled to up to 12 weeks of medical leave to take care of themselves for a serious health condition, including pregnancy, childbirth, recovery, or surgery.
- B. **Family Leave.** Eligible employees are entitled to up to 12 weeks of family leave for the following reasons:
 - 1. **Bonding Leave:** To care for and bond with a new child welcomed through birth, adoption or foster placement.
 - 2. **Caring Leave:** To care for a family member with a serious health condition.
 - 3. **Military Family Leave:** To support a family member called to active duty.
 - 4. **Safety Leave:** To receive covered types of care for yourself or a family member because of domestic abuse, sexual assault, or stalking.

You may be eligible to take both types of leave in the same year, but you cannot exceed 20 weeks total within a single benefit year. Your benefit year starts the first day you take paid leave. There is no waiting period for MNPL if you are granted the benefit.

IV. LEAVE ENTITLEMENT

- A. **Eligibility.** Eligibility determinations for MNPL benefits are made by the State of Minnesota. Generally, to be eligible for MNPL, you must:
1. Work at least 50% of the time from a location in Minnesota, including employees who work from home or spend time in other states occasionally.
 2. Meet the financial eligibility requirements by having earned over a specific amount of wages as defined by Minnesota law at the time of your requested leave.
- B. **Notification.** Employees must notify the district when they apply for MNPL benefits.
1. If the need for leave is foreseeable, the employee must provide the district with at least 30 days' advance notice.
 2. If the need for leave is not foreseeable, the employee must notify the district as soon as practicable.
 3. Notification to the district must be made using the [MN Paid Leave Notification to Northfield Public Schools form](#). This form must be completed prior to applying for leave through the State of Minnesota.
- E. **Applying for Leave.** After notifying the district, an employee will be able to apply for MNPL.
1. Employees must apply for paid leave through the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) at paidleave.mn.gov.
 2. After applying for leave, an employee will receive a Determination of Paid Leave, which is the official decision from the program regarding whether an application was approved or denied. The determination will come from DEED.
- G. **Benefit Amount.** An employee's weekly MNPL benefits are calculated and determined by DEED. Eligible employees who are approved for MNPL will receive payments directly from DEED.
1. The district does not pay into TRA or PERA during the time an employee is on MNPL.
 2. Health coverage will continue to be paid by the district while an employee is on leave, but an employee must continue to make their share of premium payments in order to keep coverage active.

3. The district will not recognize days toward service time or step advancement during the time an employee is on MNPL.
4. If you are receiving MNPL benefits, you may NOT supplement or “top off” your MNPL benefits with accrued but unused paid leave.
5. For eligible employees taking maternity leave, the district will pay for the portion of an employee’s leave not paid for by MNPL for the first eight weeks pursuant to [Policy 448](#).

VI. RETALIATION

The district will not interfere with or retaliate against employees who request or take leave in accordance with MNPL.

VII. OTHER

- A. MNPL will run concurrently with any leave and/or wage supplement for which you may be eligible for under local, state, or federal law, which may include Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and pregnancy and parenting leave.
- B. For employees hired after Jan. 1, 2026, the district must provide information about Minnesota Paid Leave within 30 days of the employee’s start date.
- C. The provisions of this policy are intended to comply with applicable law, including MNPL and applicable regulations. The district reserves the right to amend this policy at any time, for any reason. Nothing in this document creates an express or implied contract, nor is it a promise of any particular benefit. To the extent this policy conflicts with any future statutory changes, the district will follow the statutes.

Policy 410.1 Minnesota Paid Leave

Adopted: DATE

Board of Education

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 659

Northfield, Minnesota

Legal References: Minn. Stat. §§ 268B (Family and Medical Benefits)

Cross References: Minnesota Paid Leave, paidleave.mn.gov
MSBA Minnesota Paid Leave Overview

Policy 426 EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to recognize that a wide range of problems can have an effect on an employee's job performance. In most instances, the effect on job performance will be negligible so that no remedial action will be necessary. In other instances, normal supervisory assistance will serve as motivation to resolve the problem so that the employee's job performance will return to an acceptable level. In some cases, however, neither the efforts of the employee nor supervisor have the desired effect of resolving the employee's problems and unsatisfactory performance persists. In these cases, the school board believes it is in the interest of the employee, the employee's family and the district to provide an Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. Employees are assured that if there is an indication that personal problems may be the cause of unsatisfactory job performance, the employee will receive an offer of assistance to help resolve such problems in an effective and confidential manner through participation in the EAP provided by the school district. Such problems may be physical or emotional illnesses. The cause may stem from alcoholism and/or chemical abuse, financial, marital, vocational, family, legal problems, or other concerns.
- B. Employees who have a problem they feel may be affecting work performance are encouraged to seek counseling and information on a voluntary basis by directly contacting the EAP provider.
- C. Employees may be referred to the EAP by their supervisors when job performance is unsatisfactory.
- D. In instances where it is necessary, sick leave may be granted for treatment or rehabilitation on the same basis as is granted for ordinary health problems.
- E. It will be the responsibility of the employee to comply with the referral for diagnosis of his or her problems and to follow the recommendations of the EAP professional.
- F. Employees are assured that their employment status will not be jeopardized because they voluntarily utilize the EAP or if they are referred for diagnosis and treatment, accept the diagnosis, and respond to treatment.
 - 1. If the employee refuses to follow through on an EAP referral, refuses to accept diagnosis and treatment or fails to respond to treatment, and the result of such refusal or failure is that job performance continues to be substandard, regular procedures for substandard job performance issues will be followed. Such procedures may include disciplinary action and/or termination of employment.
- G. Because employee work performance can be affected by the problems of an employee's spouse or dependents, the program shall also be available to the families of Independent School District #659 employees.

Adopted: 12.8.08; Reviewed: 01.28.2021, INSERT DATE HERE

Board of Education
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 659
Northfield, Minnesota

502 SEARCH OF STUDENT LOCKERS, DESKS, PERSONAL POSSESSIONS AND STUDENT'S PERSON

I. PURPOSE

In alignment with the district's strategic commitment to people, The purpose of this policy is to provide for a safe and healthful educational environment by enforcing the Northfield School District's policies against contraband.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. Lockers and Personal Possessions Within a Locker.** Pursuant to Minnesota statutes, school lockers are the property of the district. At no time does the district relinquish its exclusive control of lockers provided for the convenience of students. Inspection of the interior of lockers may be conducted by school officials for any reason at any time, without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant. The personal possessions of students within a school locker may be searched only when school officials have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover evidence of a violation of law or school rules. As soon as practicable after the search of a student's personal possessions, the school officials must provide notice of the search to students whose lockers were searched unless disclosure would impede an ongoing investigation by police or school officials.
- B. Desks.** School desks are the property of the district. At no time does the district relinquish its exclusive control of desks provided for the convenience of students. Inspection of the interior of desks may be conducted by school officials or the classroom teacher for any reason at any time, without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant.
- C. Personal Possessions and Student's Person.** The personal possessions of students and/or a student's person may be searched when school officials have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover a violation of law or school rules. The search will be reasonable in its scope and intrusiveness.
- D.** A violation of this policy occurs when students use lockers and desks for unauthorized purposes or to store contraband. A violation occurs when students carry contraband on their person or in their personal possessions.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A.** "Contraband" means any unauthorized item possession of which is prohibited by district policy and/or law. It includes but is not limited to weapons and "look-alikes," alcoholic beverages, controlled substances and "look-alikes," overdue books and other materials belonging to the district, and stolen property.
- B.** "Personal possessions" includes but is not limited to purses, backpacks, bookbags, packages and clothing.
- C.** "Reasonable suspicion" means that a school official has grounds to believe that the search will result in evidence of a violation of district policy, rules, and/or

law. Reasonable suspicion may be based on a school official's personal observation, a report from a student, parent or staff member, a student's suspicious behavior, a student's age and past history or record of conduct both in and out of the school context, or other reliable sources of information.

- D. "Reasonable scope" means that the scope and/or intrusiveness of the search is reasonably related to the objectives of the search. Factors to consider in determining what is reasonable include the seriousness of the suspected infraction, the reliability of the information, the necessity of acting without delay, the existence of exigent circumstances necessitating an immediate search and further investigation (e.g., to prevent violence, serious and immediate risk of harm or destruction of evidence), and the age of the student.
- E. "School official" means superintendent, building principal or their designee. For the purposes of this policy the assistant principal, dean and instructional coaches for behavior ~~parking lot/security monitors~~ are considered designees.

IV. SEARCH PROCESSES

- A. School officials may inspect the interiors of lockers and desks for any reason at any time, without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant.
- B. School officials may inspect the personal possessions of a student and/or a student's person based on a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover a violation of law or school rules. A search of personal possessions of a student and/or a student's person will be reasonable in its scope and intrusiveness. The scope of inspecting a student's person includes but is not limited to a student being directed to empty their pockets and/or removing their shoes.
- C. As soon as practicable after a search of personal possessions within a locker pursuant to this policy, the school officials must provide notice of the search to students whose possessions were searched unless disclosure would impede an ongoing investigation by police or school officials.
- D. Whenever feasible, a search of a person shall be conducted in private by a school official matching the gender preference stated by the student being searched ~~of the preferred gender~~. The person being searched may request the search to be conducted by a school official of the gender the person being searched prefers. A second school official of the preferred gender shall be present as an observer during the search of a person whenever feasible.
- E. A strip search is a search involving the removal of coverings or clothing from private areas. Mass strip searches, or body cavity searches, are prohibited. Strip searches will be conducted only in circumstances involving imminent danger.
- F. A school official conducting any other search may determine when it is appropriate to have a second official present as an observer.
- G. School officials may ask that law enforcement ~~to~~ assist with any search.

- H. A copy of this policy will be included in the [Student Citizenship Handbook](#), posted on the district website, and disseminated in any other way which school officials deem appropriate. ~~The district shall provide a copy of this policy to a student when the student is given use of a locker.~~

V. DIRECTIVES AND GUIDELINES

- A. A school official conducting any search will notify the parent/~~guardian~~ caregiver of the student, unless the student is 18 years or older and has specifically requested the parent/~~guardian~~ caregiver not be informed of educational data.
- B. If a teacher or staff member has grounds to believe that a search will result in evidence of a violation of district policy, rules, and/or law, they must inform a school official. Only School officials ~~only~~ may conduct a search.
- C. School administration may establish reasonable directives and guidelines which address specific needs of the district, such as use of tape in lockers, standards of cleanliness and care, posting of pin-ups and posters which may constitute sexual harassment, etc.

VI. SEIZURE OF CONTRABAND

If a search yields contraband, school officials will seize the item and, where appropriate, turn it over to legal officials for ultimate disposition.

VII. VIOLATIONS

A student found to have violated this policy and/or the directives and guidelines implementing it shall be subject to discipline in accordance with the district's [Student Citizenship Handbook Discipline Policy](#), which may include suspension, exclusion, or expulsion, and the student may, when appropriate, be referred to legal officials.

Policy 502 Search of Student Lockers Desks, Personal Possessions and Student's Person

Adopted: 08.28.2006; Updated: 12.2014, 08.22.2022, INSERT DATE

Board of Education

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 659

Northfield, Minnesota

Legal References: U.S. Const., amend. IV
Minn. Const., art. I, §10
New Jersey v. T.L.O., 469 U.S. 325, 105 S.Ct. 733, 83 L.Ed.2d 720 (1985)
Minn. Stat. §121A.72 (School Locker Policy)
G.C. v. Owensboro Public Schools, 711 F.3d 623 (6th Cir. 2013)

Cross References: Board Policy 417 (Chemical Use and Abuse)
Board Policy 418 (Drug-Free Workplace / Drug-Free School)
Board Policy 501 (School Weapons)
Board Policy 506 (Student Discipline)

527 STUDENT USE AND PARKING OF MOTOR VEHICLES; PATROLS, INSPECTIONS AND SEARCHES

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for use and parking of motor vehicles by students in Northfield Public School locations, to maintain order and discipline in the schools and to protect the health, safety and welfare of students and school personnel.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

The policy of this school district is to allow the limited use and parking of motor vehicles by students in school district locations. This policy applies to all students in the school district.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. “Contraband” means any unauthorized item possession of which is prohibited by school district policy and/or law. It includes but is not limited to weapons and “look-alikes,” alcoholic beverages, controlled substances and “look-alikes,” materials belonging to the school district that the student should not possess, and stolen property.
- B. “Reasonable suspicion” means that a school official has grounds to believe that the search will result in evidence of a violation of school district policy, rules, and/or law. Reasonable suspicion may be based on a school official’s personal observation, a report from a student, parent or staff member, a student’s suspicious behavior, a student’s age and past history or record of conduct both in and out of the school context, or other reliable sources of information.
- C. “Reasonable scope” means that the scope and/or intrusiveness of the search is reasonably related to the objectives of the search. Factors to consider in determining what is reasonable include the seriousness of the suspected infraction, the reliability of the information, the necessity of acting without delay, the existence of exigent circumstances necessitating an immediate search and further investigation (e.g., to prevent violence, serious and immediate risk of harm or destruction of evidence), and the age of the student.
- D. “School district location” means property that is owned, rented, leased, or borrowed by the school district for school purposes, as well as property immediately adjacent to such property that may be used for parking or gaining access to such property. A school district location also shall include off school property at any school-sponsored or school-approved activity, event, or function, such as a field trip or athletic event, where students are under the jurisdiction of the school district.
- E. “School official” means superintendent, building principal or their designee. For the purposes of this policy, assistant principal and parking lot/security monitors are considered designees.

IV. STUDENT PARKING OF MOTOR VEHICLES AT SCHOOL DISTRICT LOCATIONS

- A. Students are permitted to park in a school district location as a matter of privilege, not of right. Students may be required to pay a fee to park their vehicle during the school day. Students driving a motor vehicle to a high school campus may park the motor vehicle only in parking lots designated for student parking. Students may not park vehicles in driveways, on private property, or in other designated no parking areas.
- B. When there are unauthorized vehicles parked on school district property, school officials may:
 - 1. Require the driver or other person in charge of the vehicle to move it off school district property.
 - 2. Provide for the removal of the vehicle, at the expense of the owner or operator.

V. PATROLS, INSPECTIONS AND SEARCHES

- A. **Patrols and Inspections.**

School officials may conduct routine patrols of student parking lots and other school district locations and routine inspections of the exteriors of the motor vehicles of students. Such patrols and inspections may be conducted without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant.
- B. **Search of Interior of Student Motor Vehicle.**

The interiors of unlocked or locked motor vehicles of students in school district locations, including glove or trunk compartments, may be searched when school officials have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover a violation of law and/or school policy or rule. The search will be reasonable in its scope and intrusiveness. Such searches may be conducted without notice, without consent, and without a search warrant. A student must unlock a locked motor vehicle or its compartments upon the request of a school official. Failure to do so is a violation of this policy. A school resource officer may assist in the search of a student vehicle at the request of a school official.
- C. **Drug Dog Search - Purpose and Procedure.**

The district ~~will~~ may conduct periodic searches of the schools and their adjacent parking lots with the assistance of local and county law enforcement officers and drug-sniffing dogs. Each canine unit will be accompanied by at least one school official and, when possible, the school resource officer.

In the event of a positive identification by the canines, two school officials will conduct a search of the locker or vehicle in question. If the search reveals unauthorized or illegal items, school officials may ask that law enforcement finish the search of the locker or vehicle.
- D. **Prohibition of Contraband and Interference with Patrols, Inspections, Searches and/or Seizures.**

A violation of this policy occurs when students store or carry contraband in motor vehicles in a school district location or interfere with patrols, inspections, searches and/or seizures as provided by this policy.

E. Seizure of Contraband.

If a search yields contraband, school officials will seize the item and may turn it over to legal officials for ultimate disposition when appropriate.

F. Dissemination of Policy.

A copy of this policy is available on the district's website.

VI. DIRECTIVES AND GUIDELINES

The superintendent or their designee shall develop reasonable directives and guidelines to accompany this policy.

VII. VIOLATIONS

A student found to have violated this policy and/or the directives and guidelines implementing it shall be subject to withdrawal of parking privileges and/or to discipline in accordance with the school district's ~~Student Discipline Policy~~ [Student Citizenship Handbook](#), which may include suspension, exclusion, or expulsion. In addition, the student may be referred to legal officials when appropriate.

Policy 527 Student Use and Parking of Motor Vehicles; Patrols, Inspections and Searches

Adopted: 01.28.2008; Updated: 05.2013, 07.11.2016, 08.08.2022; Non-Substantive Update: 10.03.2022

Board of Education

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 659

Northfield, Minnesota

Legal References: U.S. Const., amend. IV
Minn. Const., art. I, §10
Minn. Stat. § 123B.02, Subds. 1 and 5 (General Powers of Independent School Districts)
Minn. Stat. § 123B.38 (Hearing)
New Jersey v. T.L.O., 469 U.S. 325 (1985)

Cross References: MSBA/MASA Model Policy 417 (Chemical Use/Abuse)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 418 (Drug-Free Workplace/Drug-Free School)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 501 (School Weapons)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 502 (Search of Student Lockers, Desks, Personal Possessions and Student's Person)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 506 (Student Discipline)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 712 (Video Surveillance Other Than on Buses)

**Policy 528 STUDENT PARENTAL, FAMILY AND MARITAL STATUS
NONDISCRIMINATION**

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Northfield Public Schools' policy is to provide equal educational opportunity for all students and to prohibit discrimination on the grounds of sex, parental, family, or marital status. Students are protected from discrimination on the basis of sex and marital status pursuant to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and the Minnesota Human Rights Act. This includes discrimination on the basis of pregnancy.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. The district provides equal educational opportunity for all students, and will not apply any rule concerning a student's actual or potential parental, family, or marital status which treats students differently on the basis of sex.
- B. The district will not discriminate against any student, or exclude any student from its education program or activity, including any class or extracurricular activity, on the basis of such students' pregnancy, childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy or recovery therefrom, unless the student requests voluntarily to participate in a separate portion of the program or activity of the recipient.
- C. The district may require such a student to obtain the certification of a physician that the student is physically and emotionally able to continue participation in the normal education program or activity so long as such a certification is required of all students for other physical or emotional conditions requiring the attention of a physician.
- D. The school district will ensure that any separate and voluntary instructional program is comparable to that offered to non-pregnant students.
- E. It is the responsibility of every school district employee to comply with this policy.
- F. The school board has designated Molly Viesselman, Director of Human Resources, Northfield School District Office, 201 Orchard Street South, Northfield, MN 55057 as its Title IX Coordinator (mviesselman@northfieldschools.org). This employee coordinates the school district's efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under Title IX. ~~Any student, parent or guardian having questions regarding this policy should discuss it with the appropriate school district official provided by policy. In the absence of a specific designee, an inquiry or complaint should be referred to the superintendent or the school district human rights officer.~~
- G. Any student, parent or guardian having questions regarding the application of Title IX and its regulations and/or this policy should discuss them with the Title IX coordinator. Questions relating solely to Title IX and its regulations may be referred to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights of the United States Department of Education. In the absence of a specific designee, an inquiry or

complaint should be referred to the superintendent or the school district human rights officer.

- H. Any reports of unlawful discrimination under this policy will be handled, investigated and acted upon in the manner specified in [Policy 522](#).

Policy 528 Student Parental, Family and Marital Status Nondiscrimination

Adopted: 11.08.2004; Reviewed: 06.20.2022; Non-Substantive Update: 10.03.2022

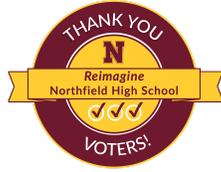
Board of Education

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 659

Northfield, Minnesota

Legal References: Minn. Stat. Ch. 363A (Minnesota Human Rights Act)
20 U.S.C. §§ 1681-1688 (Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972)
34 C.F.R. Part 106 (Implementing Regulations of Title IX)

Cross References: MSBA/MASA Model Policy 102 (Equal Educational Opportunity)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 413 (Harassment and Violence)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 522 (Title IX Sex Nondiscrimination Policy, Grievance Procedure and Process)



Reimagine Northfield High School Bond Referendum Projects | Construction Update No. 23 | Feb. 23, 2026

Recent highlights

- Wold Architects, Knutson Construction, and Northfield School District staff have been completing “owner page turn” document meetings.
- Bid documents will be issued the week of Feb. 23.
- Pre-bid walk-throughs will be on Wednesday, March 11, at 7:00 a.m. and Monday, March 16, at 3:30 p.m. at Northfield High School.
- Bid openings will be held on Thursday, March 26, at 2:00 p.m.
- The anticipated bid award dates will be Monday, April 6, and Monday, April 13.
- Permits have been and continue to be submitted for the project.

Upcoming meetings and discussions

- Monthly budget meetings are held between the district, Wold, and Knutson to keep the project on track.
- Project oversight committee meetings are held twice a month, as needed.
- Technology meetings are held twice a month.

Community Information

- Community members can view information about the project, including images and the [video walkthrough of the reimaged Northfield High School](#), on the [district website](#).
- Sal Bagley (Wold), Josh Cooper (Knutson), and Superintendent Hillmann provided a community update during the KYMN morning show on Feb. 3, 2026. You can listen to that update [here](#).

Link: <https://share.transistor.fm/s/c05f0f74>